



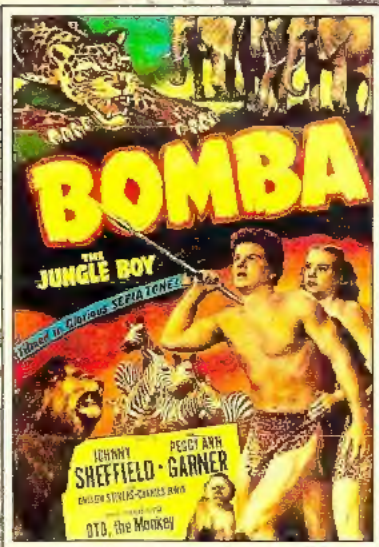
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The Magazine of Mystery and Horror

No. 15/Summer 1994/\$5.95 U.S./\$6.95 Can.



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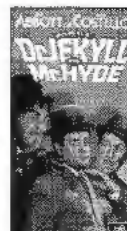


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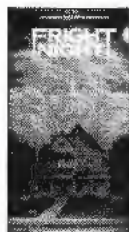
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Features and Interviews

- 17 Frank and Drac Are Back: Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee
- 19 Hammer Horror Strikes Back!
- 22 The Shadow
- 25 Guest Shots: Val Guest
- 34 The Quatermass Phenomenon
- 45 Hammer's Man of Many Parts: Michael Ripper
- 49 Sherlock Holmes and the Dreadful Business of the Naked Honeymooners
- 55 Hammett in Hollywood
- 70 Boy Meets Ape: Johnny Sheffield
- 71 Ape Woman Meets Boy: Acquanetta
- 80 Hollywood and Vines: Tarzan and the Leopard Woman
- 85 The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes: Granada's Final Bow?
- 89 Sing Along with Aladdin: Jonathan Freeman and Brad Kane
- 94 Holy Zero Hour!: DC's New Miniseries
- 96 Mouse in the House: Marcus D'Amico
- 97 Naughty Television!

Departments

- 4 Scarlet Letters
- 9 Frankly Scarlet
- 16 The News Hound
- 52 Murder by Radio
- 64 Better Holmes and Watson
- 66 Record Rack
- 93 Comic Corner
- 103 Our Man on Baker Street
- 104 Book Ends
- 113 Classifieds

COVER PHOTO: Hammer's *PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES* (1966)

Scarlet Letters

Thank you very much for sending me the issue of *Scarlet Street* (#14) with the interview, which I much enjoyed reading. I'm so glad the photos were of use.

Apologies for the long delay in responding, but I am at present in France and everything is slowly reaching me here. Thank you again.

Edward Hardwicke
Normandy, France

The info on the title of the Paul Petersen film as supplied by Mr. Lorenzo Cameron (*Scarlet Street* #14) was correct. I foolishly trusted a 1967 American International press release. The studio was notorious for changing titles and announcing films that they had absolutely no intention of filming. I called Paul Petersen and he confirmed Mr. Cameron's title.

But on his second correction, he is dead wrong. The grip was killed on the set of *GHOST IN THE INVISIBLE BIKINI* (as I originally reported to Kevin Shinnick for his two-part *ARON IN WONDERLAND*) and not on *DR. GOLDFOOT AND THE BIKINI MACHINE*. As I starred in the former and did a cameo in the latter, I can assure Mr. Cameron that my memory did not fail me. I remember the blood stains under my bare feet all too well.

Aron Kincaid
Beverly Hills, CA

Wow! Aron Kincaid! (*Scarlet Street* #13) I've often wondered what happened to him. I'm glad to see he's still working in the entertainment field. Aron has always been my favorite actor—no kidding!

When I was in high school, the local TV station gave me a bunch of glossies on the *CREATURE FEATURES* they were running. I still have the ones of Aron in *GHOST IN THE INVISIBLE BIKINI* (my favorite movie) and *BEACH BALL*!

I've never seen *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION*. Being a big fan of his (and bad movies in general), I have to run out and get a copy!

Also, thanks for the interview with Bill Campbell. I first read

about *TALES OF THE CITY* in *The Advocate*. It was great to find out the other projects he's working on.

Ron Lash
Nampa, Idaho

Bravo and it's about bloody time on an interview with Barbara Shelley. (#14) I have been trying for a few years to generate interest among various editors in an interview with this underrated actress, but their attention seems devoted solely to that other Barbara of Gothic horror films.

Richard Harland Smith
New York, NY

I'm ridiculously pleased at having my first cover story (*Scarlet Street* #14) in an issue that includes pictures of Anthony Perkins and a thoughtful article about *PSYCHO*, because at age 13, I had a major crush on him after seeing that film. Barbara Shelley's comments about "Quaterpiess" and Martin Stephens beating George



Sanders at chess were a hoot. I liked editor Richard Valley's tribute to his mother; it's refreshing to read about a mom who helped her kid buy *Famous Monsters* instead of taking it away. (My poor mom: She yearned to groom a perfect little angel in pink ruffles. Instead, she got me and my pet snake!)

If you're listing corrections in the next issue, the production cost for *VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED* was £82,000, not \$82,000. I told Sally Gellert on the phone that I'd failed to put the £ sign into the MS, but I gather from the masthead that she subsequently left the staff. The info that publicists for *CHILDREN* coined the phrase about "eyes that paralyze" was news to me; I could've sworn I'd seen a Bela Lugosi poster from the 1930s captioned "These are the eyes that paralyze."

Lelia Loban
Falls Church, VA

Reaction to Lelia's article was *DAMNED* positive, so don't miss her *Quatermass* piece in this issue. As for those paralyzing peepers, Bela probably drew first blood, but we wanted to note that the phrase was *not* used in the ads for *VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED*; it was popularized by the sequel, *CHILDREN OF THE DAMNED*.

The macabre Mother's Day Tribute (#14) was my introduction to *Scarlet Street*. The sheer volume is stunning and the coverage is impeccable and intelligent. I have definitely added your impressive title to my regular reading list.

The issue is brimming with a multitude of laudable features. My favorite was the interview with the venerable Robert Bloch. I have been an ardent admirer of his work for over 20 years.

Bloch refers to his first story publication in the January 1935 *Weird Tales*. The story ("The Feast

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Bill Campbell

Continued on page 8

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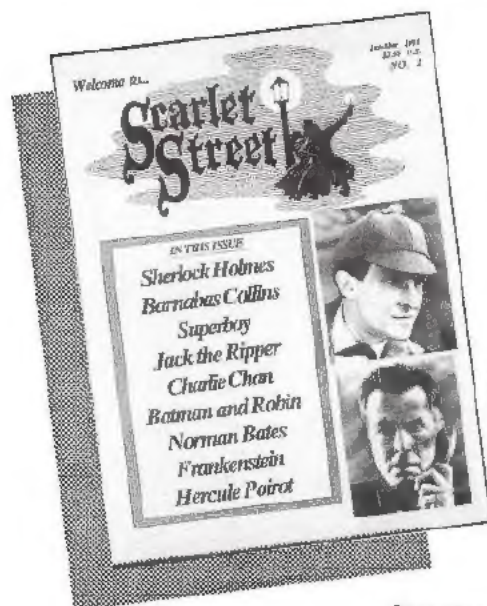
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I loved the "spread" on my work and all the nice comments.

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Your standards are beautifully high.

—Yvette Vickers

It's really outstanding!

—Robert Bloch

It's truly a terrific magazine! I don't know how you manage to pack so much in one issue. If you can't find something you like in this publication, you might as well give up.

—Neal Barrett, Jr.

Scarlet Street: The Magazine of Mystery and Horror is an attractive and entertaining magazine . . .

—Ellen Datlow

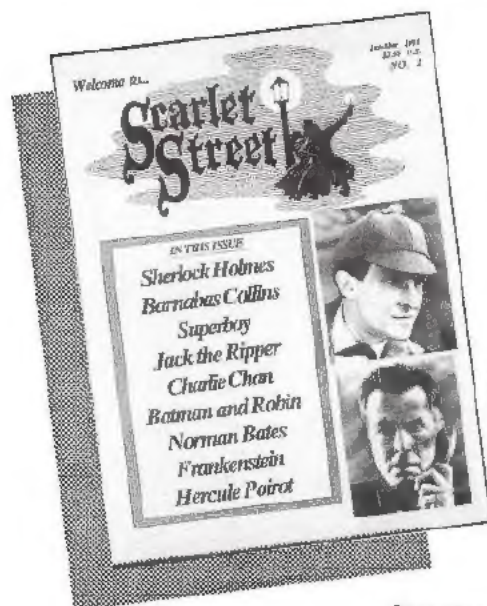
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I enjoyed the whole magazine. It is certainly entertaining to look at, and a good solid "read", too. I wish *Scarlet Street* a long, mysterious, and horrific future!

—Elizabeth Shepherd

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—Elizabeth Shepherd

SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 4

in the Abbey") was his professional debut, but he did have an earlier tale ("Lilies") published in a 1934 issue of the semi-pro *Marvel Tales*.

Bloch is justified in repudiating the claims of Joseph Stefano. Stefano's assertion that he was predominantly responsible for *PSYCHO*'s screen success is apocryphal. Stefano is a competent writer, but he built his screenplay on a foundation of solid Bloch. Except for his stint on *THE OUTER LIMITS*, Stefano's subsequent work has been mediocre at best. (Remember the abysmal *SNOWBEAST*?)

Bloch alludes to the Norman Bates age change; his 40-year-old obese Bates is a far cry from the youthful, gangling Norman portrayed by Anthony Perkins. Another distinction is the shower scene made famous by the movie. Norman's frenzied stabbing of Marion Crane has become film lore; in the novel, he decapitates Mary Crane in one swift motion.

Serious Bloch devotees might enjoy Randall Larson's bibliography, *The Complete Robert Bloch* (1986).

Timothy M. Walters

Muskogee, OK

I am fascinated by Mr. Lorenzo Cameron's letter in #14, wherein he refers to an aborted Warner Brothers project to remake "The Speckled Band" with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. I have never heard this story before, and no reference to it appears in either Chris Steinbrunner's very comprehensive book *The Films of Sherlock Holmes*, nor his equally detailed *Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection*.

Herbert Wilcox produced a sound film version of "The Speckled Band" in England in 1931, with Raymond Massey as Sherlock Holmes. There had been two silent versions made previously. First Division released the Wilcox film in the United States. It seems very odd that Warners could not clear the rights with the Estate of Arthur Conan Doyle, unless meanwhile the Estate had already made an exclusive deal for the character of Sherlock Holmes with Universal. Certainly Wilcox had no remake rights.

Steven Eramo's interview with Edward Hardwicke is a great article. Hardwicke's father, Sir Cedric, was a distinguished stage actor who also had a notable career in films. He appeared in a number of genre films, so a comprehensive article on his work is really long overdue. Among his

horror and science-fiction films were the Boris Karloff version of *THE GHOUL* and H. G. Wells' *THINGS TO COME* in England; and *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN*, *THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME*, *THE INVISIBLE MAN RETURNS*, and *THE LODGER* in Hollywood. Sir Cedric would have made a marvelous Moriarty in a Holmes film.

VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED, as re-examined by Lelia Loban, was such a good film that the forthcoming remake is unlikely to equal it. It is strange that MGM did not give *CHILDREN OF THE DAMNED* to the same producer, Ronald Kinnoch, although he made other films for them, including *INVASION QUARTET*. Kinnoch had been our production manager on *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE* and *THE HAUNTED STRANGLER*, and directed my third Marshall Thompson film, *THE SECRET MAN*. As George Barclay, he also wrote the screenplays for *DEVIL DOLL* and *THE SECRET MAN*.

In Bruce Hallenbeck's interview with Barbara Shelley, she speaks of the screenplay for *SHADOW OF THE CAT*, which was written by George Baxt. However, it is not mentioned that George also coproduced the film for Hammer with Jon Pennington under the banner of a company called BHP Films.

I cannot share Ross Care's enthusiasm for the rerecorded musical soundtrack of *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. The performance by Kenneth Alwyn and the Westminster Philharmonic is a poor imitation of Waxman's actual scoring and, for genre fans, it would be preferable if the actual soundtrack were transferred to disc, even if the technical quality could not be brought up to the same level.

Several years ago, someone released a long-playing record of music from Republic's serials and westerns, re-recorded by a new orchestra, and it was equally useless. It's the musical equivalent of remaking a classic film as a low-budget B movie.

Richard Gordon
Gordon Films, Inc.
New York, NY

I just bought the Spring 1994 issue (#14) and I feel compelled to write and say thank you. Your great feature on Barbara Shelley was wonderful. She has long deserved to be recognized as one of the great ladies of the horror/sci-fi genres. My impression is that she is as high-class and elegant as she is talented and beautiful.

The terrific photos were worth the cover price alone.

I would also like to tell you what a fine magazine you are publishing. It, like Barbara Shelley, is first-rate.

I would like to recommend for future features that you recognize several ladies from the great Roger Corman films: Susan Cabot, Barboursa Morris, Angela Greene, Sheila Carol, Pamela Duncan, and Betsy Jones-Moreland. Keep up the good work.

Mike Davidson
Dublin, GA

Thanks so much for the mention in the horror-host article. (#13.) I think Richard Scrivani did a nice job of presenting what we're all about.

I did want to address one point, however. In the intro of the *SPIDER BABY* show, what I actually said was that Lon Chaney was probably crooked during most of the filming. Since this quote appeared in print, I felt I should set the record straight.

For the actual broadcast, I did an interview with the director of *SPIDER BABY*, Jack Hill. The subject of Chaney's reputation as a drinker came up, and Jack made a point of stating that Lon was on the wagon for the entire shoot—at least until the last day. He apparently was looking forward to the opportunity of playing a role with some very intentional comedy.

Should any of Lon Chaney's family or ardent supporters come across the article, I wanted to be clear that no slight whatsoever was intended. Again, thanks for the article.

Chip Hess
"Ghoul Dad"
Chicago, IL

You asked for mail; here it is. Just thought I'd add my two cents about *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*.

In my opinion, any *Scarlet Street* reader could do a better job of casting than those morons in Hollywood. My choice for Lestat? Julian Sands. At least he matches the general physical description, and usually can act. How about the lead actor from *STRICTLY BALLROOM* for Louis? He's a bit young, but he does have the lithe grace that Anne Rice gave the character. Or if the studio must have a popular name, how about Robert Downey, Jr.? And Miranda Richardson would have been the perfect Gabriella.

However, we should remember that it could have been worse. They could

Continued on page 11

Frankly Scarlet



Rex Stout had the right idea. In 72 Nero Wolfe mysteries, from 1934's *Fer-de-lance* through *A Family Affair* in 1975, the world stood still. Well, not the world, exactly, but Wolfe's World certainly did—the weighty detective and his confidential assistant, Archie Goodwin, took their final bows as essentially the same men that they had been during the Great Depression. They never aged. They never wed. They never invited strangers into their shared brownstone on West 35th Street for longer than it took to solve the problem at hand. What major calamities intruded on their daily routine (usually murders, and usually inflicted on such peripheral characters as chef Marko Vukcic and operative Johnny Keems) never caused more than a ripple in the still waters of Wolfe's World. Even with that last case, when the treachery of one such peripheral character threatened to destroy that World forever, it was only a far greater calamity—the death of Rex Stout at 88—that brought it to an end.

Sounds a little dull, doesn't it, gang? A trifle stagnant? Far from it. Stout knew that, for the long haul, it was essential that his leading players remain constant, that, in fact, change was anathema—so long as the stories involving his protagonists remained fresh and intriguing.

Stout also knew that any intrusion of personal change—marriage and divorce for Archie, dieting and bungee jumping for Wolfe—would be nothing more than cheap, soap-opera theatrics. Such cheesy plot devices would add nothing to his novels, and subtract plenty.

It's a lesson that few creators of imaginary worlds ever manage to learn. Consider the following:

In his second Sherlock Holmes mystery, 1890's *The Sign of Four*, Arthur Conan Doyle created a romantic interest for Dr. Watson in heroine Mary Morstan and, for a finish, married the lovesick physician off to her. The result: Conan Doyle robbed Sherlock Holmes of a boon companion, forced the good doctor out of his Baker Street rooms, and spent the next 20 or so stories dredging up feeble excuses to get Watson out of the marriage bed and back on the case-book.

In *THE THIN MAN*, the 1934 movie smash based on the Dashiell Hammett novel of the same name, William Powell and Myrna Loy immortalized Nick and Nora Charles, the first (and best) husband-and-wife detective team. *AFTER THE THIN*



Nick Charles, Jr. (Dean Stockwell) gets what he deserves for almost ruining the Thin Man series in 1947's *SONG OF THE THIN MAN*.

MAN came two years later, and, at its conclusion, we learned that Nora was expecting a bundle of boy—a little Nick, shall we say, in time. The result: Nick and Nora (and their fans) were saddled with a superfluous brat for three of the remaining four Thin Man mysteries (they managed to ditch him for 1944's *THE THIN MAN GOES HOME*) and were forced to abandon their free-wheeling party ways for a dull domesticity.

In the 1969 *Batman* story "One Bullet Too Many," scripted by Frank Robbins, Dick Grayson grew up and

left Wayne Manor. Dick had been pushing 16 for the previous 30 years or so, but suddenly he was fresh out of high school and headed for college—leaving Batman minus one Robin the Boy Wonder. The result: a string of comic-book catastrophes that continues to this day. Dick became Robin the Teen Wonder, a young man battling baddies in a pair of green jockey shorts. Then Dick dropped the costume altogether and became the black-garbed Nightwing. Then Batman got a new Robin (Jason Todd). Then The Joker killed Jason. Then Batman got a new Robin (Tim Drake). Then Tim got a new costume. Then . . .

In 1982's *STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN*, Spock (Leonard Nimoy) bit the cosmic dust. The result: two sequels (1984's *STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK*, in which they blew up the Starship Enterprise, and 1986's *STAR TREK IV: THE VOYAGE HOME*) that struggled to return the Trek World to what it had been before the powers-that-be knocked it out of orbit. (To its great credit, *STAR TREK IV* confined these desperate machinations to the story's borderlands; the result was arguably the best—and certainly the cleverest—film in the series.)

Three years after *STAR TREK IV*, when the next film in the series went into production, the status was at last nearly quo—and then what happened? 1989's *STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER*, that's what happened, a sequel that suffered not only from weak plotting, but from faulty engine work. That's right; they'd finally beamed the characters back on board, so there was nothing left to do but make the new Enterprise a lemon. (You never saw any malfunctions in Wolfe's kitchen, that's for damn sure.)

Now comes the first film mixing the cast of television's *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* with several veterans of what has come to be called Trek Classic, and—guess what, gang—they're planning to kill off Captain Kirk (William Shatner)! They're dropping Spock and McCoy! (Nimoy, no fool, doesn't like the script.) They're revving up to make an all-too-familiar hash of it!

True, the original cast is getting on in years. But that only matters if

the Star Trek universe must be forced to conform to the real world. That only matters if, as in the real world, officers must eventually retire, younger officers must receive promotion or be considered failures, (star) ships must be junked, heroes must live and die (and live again). In other words, that matters not at all.

It is lack of imagination that makes filmmakers put those characters we love through the mill; it is the inability to devise stories so intriguing in themselves that no melodramatic weddings, births, and deaths, no inexplicable growth spurts and no sudden changes of address need apply.

Yes, Rex Stout had the right idea, and now Robert Goldsborough, who is currently writing an authorized series of Nero Wolfe mysteries, is carrying the torch. Whatever one thinks of an author (even an authorized one) usurping another man's creations, it must be admitted that Goldsborough knows the territory—and, tellingly, knows that the territory won't benefit from "overdevelopment." As we suffer through the death of Kirk, the resurrection of Superman, and the back pains of Batman, that enduring old brownstone on West 35th Street looks cozier than ever.

It's a scandal! It's an outrage! It's come to my attention that the glamorous Debbie Rochon, associate editor at that voluptuous volume called *Femme Fatales*, has been making snippy insinuations in *FF* about yours truly: to wit, that, at last fall's Chiller Convention in Secaucus, New

Jersey, I dressed myself up in a Little Lord Fauntleroy suit and roamed the halls in the early morning hours, pretending to be Stinky from THE ABBOTT & COSTELLO SHOW and threatening to "harm" innocent passersby. Nothing could be further from the truth, and I've got the Mr. Baccialupe costume to prove it!

Ah, well—anyone can make a mistake, I guess. And if anyone tells me that Debbie shaved her head, stuffed a stogie in her mouth, and, answering to the name "Sidney Fields," threatened to evict everyone from the hotel—why, I'll be the first to defend her!

Last spring, while I was leafing through the dozens of articles and interviews on my desk (and floor), a fortuitous phone call from *Scarlet Street's* managing editor, Tom Amorosi, sent my mind on safari. (No, I'm not now using my skull as a hollow threat; I'm speaking metaphorically.) Tom, who keeps track of our distribution, had news: namely, that everyone's favorite *Magazine of Mystery and Horror* is distributed to Mauritius, a small island in the Indian Ocean, east of Africa. Darkest Africa, thought I—and, being a movie buff, followed that thought with visions of Mighty Joe Young; She Who Must Be Obeyed; Bing, Bob, and Dottie on the ROAD TO ZANZIBAR; and, of course, Tarzan of the Apes.

There was a time (roughly between my Hardy Boys and Fu Manchu periods) when the Lord of the Jungle was my prime literary companion. I still pick up an Edgar

Rice Burroughs adventure every now and then, and for me the Tarzan movies have never lost their primitive appeal.

That's why I'm happy to temporarily trade in the rainy pavement of *Scarlet Street* for steamy jungle trails. Follow this issue's Call of the Wild and it will lead you to interviews with Johnny Sheffield (the Boy who would be Bomba) and Acquanetta (whose ties to the Dark Continent range from playing the gorilla-turned-temptress of CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN to the spotted terror of TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN).

Back in civilization, we have Tom Weaver's terrific interview with Quatermass director Val Guest. Mr. Weaver has been a *Scarlet Street* booster since our first ish—though sometimes, particularly when we're covering Hammer Films, he must think he's wandered into the wrong neighborhood. I want to thank Tom for letting us run the Guest piece, which you'll also find in his latest book, *Attack of the Monster Movie Makers* (McFarland, 1994)—along with a host of other interviews no *Scarlet Streeter* should be without.

Tarzan! Quatermass! Paula the Ape Woman! You'll find more gems in *Scarlet Street* than there are in the fabled Lost City of Opar—but, rather than have me list them all, there's a little thing called the TABLE OF CONTENTS on page three. Feast your eyes!

Richard Valley



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SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 8

have chosen Billy Idol for Lestat and Macaulay Culkin in drag for Claudia.

Linda L. Merritt
Minneapolis, MN

Don't joke; thanks to MRS. DOUBTFIRE, more actors are now vying to wear dresses in front of the camera than at home! And speaking of drag (clever, clever us!), don't miss next issue's angora-filled preview of ED WOOD, the one director of the 50s who was truly into TV, plus the androgynous vamps of INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE—and even Sherlock Holmes in a piece called CROSS-DRESSED TO KILL!

☐

I chanced upon your magazine (Scarlet Street #13) and was quite delighted with the contents. In particular, the original-script references to the final version of THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES brought a new light to one of my favorite films. I'd find similar historical reportage on A STUDY IN SCARLET and MURDER BY DECREE equally desirable.

Speaking of Holmes, perhaps you can clear up a mystery as to how many seasons and versions of the Granada series are (A), still airing and (B), available on laserdisc as well as cassette. Have you published a

complete episode guide, and if so in what issue? Any news on new Sherlockian feature films in the works? (The Canary Trainer, perhaps?)

Since I was hardly around during the Golden Years of Broadcasting, it brought me great pleasure to read about the radio version of SAM SPADE. I cast a personal vote for more coverage of the creations of Hammett, Chandler, and Cain in all aspects of the media, and more coverage of the film noir genre overall.

Steven Austin
Van Nuys, CA

Thanks for the kind words. More Hammett, Chandler, and Cain is coming your way. (This issue, in fact!) Most of the Granada Holmes shows air on A&E in edited versions; presumably, they will run the rest when they become available. For completists, we recommend the MPI Home Video releases, which include the missing scenes. Currently, the only program on disc is THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES.

☐

Scarlet Street #13 was only the second issue I've picked up; like the previous one (#7), it was a wonderful wealth of information. Every article held my interest!

News of THE VAN HELSING CHRONICLES was another case of history repeating itself. I've long

noted that the sequel to the 1931 Bela Lugosi DRACULA was DRACULA'S DAUGHTER, which starred Edward Van Sloan as Van Helsing, but no Dracula. And, of course, the sequel to Hammer's HORROR OF DRACULA was BRIDES OF DRACULA, which starred Peter Cushing as Van Helsing—but again, no Dracula!

I always appreciate seeing anything on Ian Ogilvy, though I'd prefer a look at RETURN OF THE SAINT and his work since. How ironic that Vincent Price's best performance was in a film so repulsive that many have walked out in the middle of it. I found the late-night "butchered" version of CONQUEROR WORM far more watchable, when five of the last 10 minutes were snipped out.

THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES is one of my favorite Holmes films as well. It always struck me as being somewhat hard to follow, though—now I know why. I wonder if restoration-crazed film fanatics will ever give us a version of the film with the missing (and clearly important) scenes put back. After all, they did it with the 1931 FRANKENSTEIN—as well as STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE.

George Zucco was the Professor Moriarty, in my opinion. When the Granada series announced that they

were doing **THE FINAL PROBLEM**, I anxiously waited to see how their casting would measure up against Zucco. To my amazement, their choice of Eric Porter could hardly have been better—he shares Zucco's glaringly evil eyes! In many ways, though, I think Zucco got more of a chance to radiate evil. What a shame to find out that Fox intended to continue their series, but didn't—for the most part, the Universal films were nowhere near as classy, and the updating has miffed many purists over the decades.

The Ida Lupino piece was very informative. I have a feeling she was the kind of actress favored by The Spirit's creator, Will Eisner, when he was "casting" femme fatales for his comic strip. Gazing over the photos of her, my only question was "Didn't she ever smile?"

The photo on page 56 from **FIEND WITHOUT A FACE** recalls Dan Aykroyd's line in the compilation film **IT CAME FROM HOLLYWOOD**: "I don't understand; we sprayed for brains only last week!"

I hadn't realized that there were so many films based on H. P. Lovecraft's stories. In addition, Dan Curtis' **NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS** seems a thinly-veiled remake of **THE HAUNTED PALACE**, with the plot

involving a man possessed by the ghost of an ancestor. I saw **NIGHT** some years before **PALACE**, and when I finally saw the Price film I was delighted that the point where **NIGHT** ends was where **PALACE** really got interesting. (In each case, just as the husband is planning to leave the house forever, he goes back for something he forgot. When he fails to return, his wife goes in—only to find him completely possessed!)

The Howard Duff interview had me angry that the **SAM SPADE** series didn't transfer to TV, thanks to McCarthy. (May he rest in pieces!) The description of the show sounds like it predated **BATMAN** by about 20 years, or even **ROCKY AND BULLWINKLE** in the area of bad puns and double-entendres. Incidentally, **THE SAINT** on radio, as played by Vincent Price, was also very much on the humorous side. The stories tended to be rather straight, but the dialogue by Simon Templar (Price) revealed a rather loony-minded hero, refusing to take anything seriously—which was more in tune with Leslie Charteris' writing than most of the films and TV shows.

CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION sounds like it would go over well at parties. It was the funniest article in the issue, especially the final para-

graph in which Aron Kincaid reveals he bought a copy of the film—just to destroy it! (Didn't Bible-belters do that with Beatles paraphernalia back in the 60s?)

Finally, I could practically kill for some of the items listed for sale in **SS**. I hope in a few years, when finances improve, I'll be able to afford them.

Henry J. Kujawa
Camden, NJ

*Practically kill? Practically? Meanwhile, gang, if you missed **Scarlet Street #13**, we hope Henry here has whetted your appetite. Turn immediately to that nice I'll coupon on page 7 and . .*

Since I only recently discovered your magazine, I'm wondering if you've ever done a feature, or even a mention, of actor Ralph Meeker, who died in 1988. He's best known, of course, for his starring role as Mike Hammer in the 1955 film noir masterpiece **KISS ME DEADLY**, and a couple of decades later he was eaten alive by giant rats in **FOOD OF THE GODS**. I really think he deserves serious consideration in your pages.

Or how about a nice, long interview with David Nelson?

Jack Stalnaker
Houston, TX

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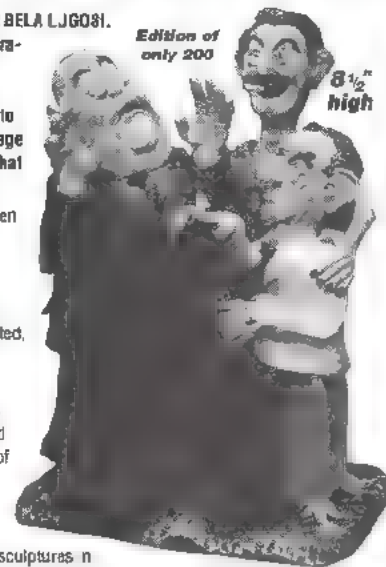
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Street #6, Jack, which is still available. By the way, our early issues had a much smaller print run than is the case nowadays—so if you want 'em, grab 'em, 'cause the supply is runnin' low.

Thoroughly enjoyed all the fine tributes to Vincent Price. We all must go sometime, but Vincent will live on in film and video.

Scarlet Street #13 is another neat issue. My only complaint: not one photo of Jessie Lilley. At the risk of sounding bold, brash, and downright fresh, I must say Ms. Lilley is a very attractive woman. Life is short and I had to blurt that out. I'll stop before I get in deep trouble. Besides, some goofball is pounding on my door ranting "Morgan, come out!" Darn vampire has the wrong house again!

Conrad Widener
S. Connellsville, PA

No pix of Madame Pub this ish, either, Conrad—but if you haven't grabbed our terrific reprint of Scarlet Street #1 (with its picture-packed wrap-around History of Scarlet Street), whaddaya waitin' for? It's got more photos of the woman Forry Ackerman calls Wonder Woman than you can shake a stick at - if that's your idea of a good time.

Last fall each and every one of us was personally touched by the death

of Vincent Price. I knew Vincent for 17 years; I was privileged to be invited by the family to attend the celebration of his life in November. Since 1991, I've been project consultant on Tim Burton's documentary homage, which is currently on 20th Century Fox's release schedule in the fall. It didn't matter that his health wasn't good, that he was bereft without Coral. He was still involved with our documentary; he was buying new art and new music—right up until his death. I simply took it for granted that he'd be there. Like he'd been my entire life . . .

The genre publications' tributes were an interesting array—of course, SS had published that great coverage in #7, but I thought the personal tributes you published in #13 were wonderfully appropriate and so much more fitting than the career retros many of the "gore" mags ran.

It's scandalous that Vincent's career hasn't received major media attention over the years; I'm sure that, now, there will be a raft of books published. So I am very proud to say that Citadel Press has signed me to write *The Films of Vincent Price*. I consider it an enormous responsibility, and am determined to create a real picture of the man we knew and loved. It's my goal to imbue the book with

Vincent's humor and charm, and to give appropriate attention to an enormously diverse career.

I'd be very grateful for any input your readers might care to contribute: rare stills, unusual graphics (ads for games and products, video promotional pieces), amusing or especially interesting local reviews (especially of the early films). I'll include a list of contributors in the book's acknowledgments. The address for this project is:

Lucy Chase Williams
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DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 1 (#DI-01)

THE KILLER SHREWS (1959) James Best, Ingrid Goude, Ken Curtis, Gordon McClendon.
THE GIANT GILA MONSTER (1958) Don Sullivan, Lisa Simone, Shug Fisher, Jerry Corwin.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 2 (#DI-02)

HORROR CHAMBER OF DR. FAUSTUS (1958) Pierre Brasseur, Edith Scob, Aida Valli.
THE MANSTER (1960) Peter Dinkley, Jane Hylton, Sakshi Nakamura.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 3 (#DI-03)

CREATURE FROM THE HAUNTED SEA (1961) Anthony Carbone, Betsy Jones Moreland, Edward Wain, directed by Roger Corman.
THE DEVIL'S PARTNER (1958) Ed Nelson, Jean Allison, Richard Crane, Fogar Buchanan.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 4 (#DI-04)

ATTACK OF THE GIANT LEECHES (1959) Ken Clarke, Yvette Vickers, Bruno Vesota, Michael Emmett.
A BUCKET OF BLOOD (1959) Dick Miller, Barbours Morris, Anthony Carbone, Ed Nelson, Bruno Vesota, Judy Bamber, directed by Roger Corman.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 5 (#DI-05)

ASSIGNMENT OUTER SPACE (1960) Rick von Nutter, Gaby Fannon, David Montez, Archie Savage.
THE PHANTOM PLANET (1961) Dean Fredericks, Colleen Gray, Anthony Dexter, Delores Faith, Franks X. Bushman.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 6 (#DI-06)

THE WASP WOMAN (1959) Susan Cabot, Fred Easley, Barbours Morris, Michael Mark, directed by Roger Corman.
BEAST FROM HAUNTED CAVE (1959) Michael Forest, Frank Wolff, Sheila Carol, Wally Campo.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 8 (#DI-08)

BEYOND THE TIME BARRIER (1959) Robert Clarke, Darlene Tompkins, Arianne Aden, Vladimir Sokoloff.
AMAZING TRANSPARENT MAN (1959) Douglas Kennedy, Marguerite Chapman, James Griffith, Ivan Triesaull.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 9 (#DI-09)

INCREDIBLE PETRIFIED WORLD (1957) Robert Clarke, John Carradine, Phyllis Coates, Sheila Carol.
TEENAGE ZOMBIES (1957) Don Sullivan, Steve Corde, Katherine Victor, Jay Hawk.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 11 (#DI-11)

LAST WOMAN ON EARTH (1960) Betsy Jones Moreland, Anthony Carbone, Edward Wain, directed by Roger Corman.
LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (1960) Jonathan Haze, Mel Welles, Jackie Joseph, Dick Miller, Jack Nicholson.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 14 (#DI-14)

HORROR HOTEL (1960) Christopher Lee, Bette St. John, Patricia Jessel, William Abner.
THE HEAD (1959) Michel Simon, Horst Frank, Karin Krenk, Paul Dabire.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 25 (#DI-25)

CARNIVAL OF SOULS (1962) Candace Hillgoss, Sidney Berger, Herk Harvey, Francis Feist.
THE DEVIL'S MESSENGER (1961) Lon Chaney, Karen Kadler, John Crawford.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 26 (#DI-26)

HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD (1961) Reg Park, Christopher Lee, Leonora Ruffo, directed by Mario Bava.
CASTLE OF BLOOD (1964) Barbara Steele, George Riviere, Margherita Robsahm.

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DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 27 (#DI-27)

GIANT OF METROPOLIS (1962) Gordon Mitchell, Bella Cortez, Liana Orfei. Furio Meniconi.
INVINCIBLE GLADIATOR (1962) Richard Harrison, Isabelle Corey, Joseph Maico.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 30 (#DI-30)

COUNT DRACULA'S GREAT LOVE (1972) Paul Naschy. Vic Winter, Ingrid Berio. Rated "R".
THE VAMPIRE'S NIGHT ORGY (1973, aka **ORGY OF THE VAMPIRES**) Jack Taylor, John Richard. Rated "R".

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 32 (#DI-32)

SKY TROOP ATTACK (1959) Michael Forest, Sheila Carol, Wally Campo, Roger Corman.
BATTLE OF BLOOD ISLAND (1959) Ron Kennedy, Richard Devon.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 34 (#DI-34)

SWAMP WOMEN (1956) Beverly Garland, Marie Windsor, Michael Touch, Connors, Carole Matthews.
GUNSLINGER (1956) John Ireland, Beverly Garland, Allison Hayes, directed by Roger Corman.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 35 (#DI-35)

BATTLE OF THE WORLDS (1962) Claude Rains, Eli Carter, Maya Brent.
ATOM AGE VAMPIRE (1962) Alberto Lupo, Susanne Lorei, Sergio Fantoni.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 37 (#DI-37)

NIGHT TIDE (1961) Dennis Hopper, Linda Lawson, Luana Anders, Gavin Muir.
BATTLE BEYOND THE SUN (1963) Ed Perry, Andy Stewart, Bruce Hunter.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 38 (#DI-38)

ISLAND OF LOST GIRLS (1973) Brad Harris, Tony Kendall, Monicaardo. Rated "R".
FRANKENSTEIN'S CASTLE OF FREAKS (1973) Rostano Brazzi, Michael Dunn, Boris Lugosi. Rated "R".

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 39 (#DI-39)

NIGHTMARE CASTLE (1965) Barbara Steele, Paul Miller, Rik Battaglia.
DIABOLICAL DR. Z (1965) Howard Vernon, Mabel Karr, Esilda Bait.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 40 (#DI-40)

HANDS OF A STRANGER (1962) Paul Lukather, James Stapleton, Joan Harvey, Irish McCallis.
TORMENTED (1960) Richard Carlson, Juli Redding, Susan Gordon, Eugene Sanders.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 43 (#DI-43)

THE MAGIC SWORD (1961) Basil Rathbone, Gary Lockwood, Anne Helm, Vampire.
DR. BLOOD'S COFFIN (1960) Kieron Moore, Hazel Court, Ian Hunter.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 44 (#DI-44)

WEB OF THE SPIDER (1970) Anthony Franciosa, Michele Mercer, Klaus Kinski.
SATANIC (1959 aka **SATANIK**) Emilio Pena, Madge Kabopka, Armando Caltro.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 45 (#DI-45)

HIGH SCHOOL CAESAR (1960) John Ashley, Gary Vinson, Lowell Brown, Judy Nugent.
DATE BAIT (1960) Gary Clarke, Mario Ryan, Richard Gering.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 46 (#DI-46)

THE EYE CREATURES (1959) John Ashley, Shirley McLane, Cynthia Hull, Ciel Davis.
ZONTAR, THE THING FROM VENUS (1959) John Agar, Anthony Houston, Susan Bluman, Warren Hammack.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 49* (#DI-49)

HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL (1959) Vincent Price, Carol Ohmart, Richard Long, Carolyn Craig, Elisha Cook.
THE BAT (1959) Vincent Price, Agnes Moorehead, John Sutton.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 50* (#DI-50)

CURSE OF THE DEVIL (1973) Paul Naschy, Faye Falcon, Mariza Clavarez. Rated "R".
TOWER OF SCREAMING VIRGINS (1971) Terry Torday, Jean Plat. Rated "R".

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 51* (#DI-51)

FANGS OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968, aka **MELENNKA**, Anita Eckberg, John Hamilton, Diana Lorys.
KILL BABY KILL (1966 aka **CURSE OF THE LIVING DEAD**, G. Rossi Stuart, Erica Blanc, Max Lawrence. Directed by Mario Bava.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 53* (#DI-53)

BELA LUGOSI MEETS A BROOKLYN GORILLA (1952) Bela Lugosi, Sammy Petillo, Duke Mitchell, Charlene, Muriel Landers.
BRIDE OF THE GORILLA (1951) Lon Chaney, Raymond Burr, Barbara Payton, Tom Conway.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 55* (#DI-55)

SWORD AND THE DRAGON (1956) Boris Andreiev, Natalie Medvedeva, Andriy Abrikosov.
THE DEVIL'S COMMANDMENT 1956 aka **I VAMPIRO** Gianni Canale, Dario Michaelis.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 56* (#DI-56)

BLOODSUCKERS (1970) Peter Cushing, Patrick MacNee, Patrick Mower, Imogen Hassell. Rated "R".
BLOODTHIRST (1966, Robert Winston, Yvonne Nielson, Judy Dennis.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 58* (#DI-58)

SPIDER BABY (1964) Lon Chaney, Cerdi Ohmart, Jiri Banner, Marlan Moreland.
MONDO BALORDO (1964, Documentary narrated by Boris Karloff.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 59* (#DI-59)

HORRIBLE DR. HICCOCK (1962) Barbara Steele, Robert Flerying, Montgomery Glenn.
AWFUL DR. ORLOFF (1962) Howard Vernon, Conrado San Marlin, Diana Lorys.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 60* (#DI-60)

THE FIENDISH GHOULS (1959 aka **MANIA**) Peter Cushing, Donald Pleasance, Dermot Walsh.
HORRORS OF SPIDER ISLAND (1959 aka **IT'S HOT IN PARADISE**) Alex D'Amoy, Barbara Valentina, Reiner Brand, Heiga Neuner, Eva Schaudand.



ALL NEW!
 An all new height in fright and might!



OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD ADVENTURE!



THIS OFFER ABSOLUTELY ENDS AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT NOVEMBER 30, 1994!

the NEWS



HOUND

Photo: © 1994 Warner Bros. Television

Your Rapacious Reporter is back to spice up those good ol' summer dog days with these nerve-wracking news flashes:

A sequel to the Warner Bros. smash hit *THE FUGITIVE* has already been scripted, and Harrison Ford and Tommy Lee Jones are very likely to return if the script is up to snuff. Meanwhile, *FUGITIVE* produced Arnold Kopelson has started production in Boston on the Dustin Hoffman thriller *OUTBREAK*, Wolfgang Peterson (*IN THE LINE OF FIRE*) directs this infectious tale of an uncontrollable virus. It's cowritten by *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* scenarist Ted Tally.

Strike up the John Barry music.... James Bond returns with a vengeance in three productions to be shot in rapid succession by the *bubbe* of Bondage, producer Cubby Broccoli. The first of the trio starts rolling in September for a projected Summer 1995 release. The rumored candidates to inherit Timothy Dalton's lapsed licence to kill included Liam Neeson and Hugh Grant, but the man who will fill 007's tuxedo for Broccoli & Co. is *REMINGTON STEELE* star Pierce Brosnan.

George Lucas, hard at work (we hope) on his three new *STAR WARS* epics, is planning to have his Industrial Light and Magic wizards spruce up the special effects on the original three features. Lucas wants to reissue them to the local cinemas at two-month intervals to whet our appetites for the new Skywalker saga.

Other sequels currently in production: *LAWNMOWER MAN II*; *DARKMAN 2: DURANT RETURNS* (and proceeds directly to home video); and *CANDYMAN 2: FAREWELL TO THE FLESH*.... *TREMORS 2* reunites the director, screenwriter, and stars of the 1990 terror-ific original.... Freddy Krueger returns with a "new look" (but the same old star) in *WES CRAVEN'S NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET: THE REAL STORY*. Director Craven is currently shooting *VAMPIRE IN BROOKLYN* starring (and written by) Eddie Murphy and his brother Charlie.

On the subject of vampires... here are some more waiting in the wings: *THE VAMPIRE'S EMBRACE*, which features women in the roles of writer, producer, director, and fiendish attacker; *TOMORROW IS ANOTHER NIGHT* (*L'affaire du Siecle*) from *DIVA* director Jean-Jacques Beineix; and the Orlando-based *VAMPIRE BABES FROM OUTER SPACE*.

Horror of another magnitude looms as Michael Jackson produces and

tion of Charlotte Bronte's Gothic classic *JANE EYRE*.... Other cinematic *deja vu*s in development include *LAURA* from Oscar-winning screenwriter Ron Bass (*RAINMAN*), TriStar's "tension-filled, non-campy" *GODZILLA* movie (from the scripters of Disney's *ALADDIN*. Hmm....), and John Carpenter's *VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED*. And let's not forget *MARY SHELLEY'S FRANKENSTEIN* stalking toward us soon. By the way, Robert DeNiro is socking away an estimated \$4 to \$5 million for his 20 minutes of screen time as "The Creature." Bread.... good!

Although original author Lydia La Plante has been hired by Universal to rewrite the screenplay for their big-screen adaptation of *PRIME SUSPECT*, actress Helen Mirren remains skeptical of this project from which she has been effectively frozen out. Among the actresses rumored for consideration as DCI Jane Tennison: Jane Fonda, who might be courted out of self-imposed retirement.

Thrilling TV news for fans of *X-FILES*: The Fox Network is bringing the eerie series back for a second season. Fox is also debuting *SHOCK ROCK*, a new summer anthology of suspense tales. And Fox's telefilm *ALIEN NATION: DARK HORIZON* hovers into view soon.

SILK STALKINGS is slinking back to USA Network this fall. Star Rob Estes, mortally wounded in the cliffhanger, pulls through (surprise!) to return as Detective Chris Lorenzo. Estes will also be seen as Mickey Spillaine's private dick in *DEADLIER THAN EVER: A MIKE HAMMER MYSTERY*. This potential series of TV features will also star *BAYWATCH* actress Pamela Anderson.

WISEGUY may return to CBS as a series of telefilms, again starring Ken Wahl as undercover agent Vinny Terranova. Also due for a return on CBS is that Maverick, James Garner, who'll open *THE ROCKFORD FILES* again in at least a half-dozen new two-hour installments.

Continued on page 20



Phyllis Coates played Lois Lane's mom on the season finale of *LOIS & CLARK: THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN*.


stars in a remake of George Pal's 1960 fantasy *7 FACES OF DR. LAO*. The script is finished, miniature sets have been built, Stan Winston has been hired to do the effects, and Pinewood Studios in the UK has been reserved. Now all someone has to do is kick the plug out of the wall.

The rash of remakes continues: *DR. JEKYLL AND MS. HYDE* is now before the cameras in Montreal. The Rastar feature stars Sean Young and Lysette Anthony (*DARK SHADOWS' Angelique*).... Martin Scorsese is producing a remake of the 1946 Val Lewton/Boris Karloff drama *BED LAM* for RKO.... Franco Zeffirelli is scheduled to begin a new produc-

FRANK AND DRAC ARE BACK!

Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee
reunite to narrate the Hammer
documentary: **FLESH AND BLOOD**

by Sean Farrell



Cold-blooded Baron and pathetic
Creature! Blood-thirsted Count and
vampire-hunting Physician! Peter Cushing
and Christopher Lee are together again! The
legendary horror stars, who first teamed up
in 1957's **THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN**
and went on to appear together in such clas-
sics as **HORROR OF DRACULA** (1958), **THE**



and ears of the people who were in it. And I've got interviews with everybody!"

The impressive roster of interviewees includes screenwriter Jimmy Sangster (1958's *HORROR OF DRACULA*); directors Roy Ward Baker (1970's *SCARS OF DRACULA*) and Freddie Francis (1964's *THE EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN*); and Hammer scream queens Raquel Welch (1966's *ONE MILLION YEARS B. C.*), Veronica Carlson (1970's *FRANKENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED*), and Martine Beswick (1971's *DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE*). Newsom even spoke with former Hammer honcho Michael Carreras shortly before the studio chief's untimely death.

Referring to the documentary, Newsom says, "Making it was a lot of fun. It's taken three years, but it was all mine—I mean, all my money and time. I had the patience to hold out for nifty things—home movies, behind the scenes stuff, and the extra interview here or there."

Harmony Gold is handling distribution in the States, but Hammer itself is distributing the program in England. "They sold it sight unseen to the BBC," Newsom adds. "Hammer is evidently so beloved by the guy that they were dealing with, that he said, 'Yup! I'll take it!'"

The title, *FLESH AND BLOOD*, refers not only to the sex and violence that was Hammer's stock-in-trade, but to the fact that the film company was a family business, having been founded by Michael Carreras' grandfather in the 1930s. Hammer's early history is covered in the documentary, but most of the 95 minutes concentrates on the 50s and 60s, the period in which Hammer updated many classic horror films with liberal doses of splatter and sex—not to mention style and superb performances. Newsom devotes part of his film to a special section titled "Hammer Glamour," which examines the company's reliance on sex and exploitation to sell its movies.

Featuring generous film clips from all of Hammer's important productions, *FLESH AND BLOOD: THE HAMMER HERITAGE OF HORROR* will be a must-see for fans of Hammer.

MUMMY (1959), and THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES (1959), are the narrators of a new documentary about Hammer Films, the equally legendary British company that gave new life to the horror genre back in the late 50s and 60s.

According to producer Ted Newsom, "FLESH AND BLOOD: THE HAMMER HERITAGE OF HORROR is the complete title. It's a 95-minute documentary covering the science-fiction and Gothic fantasy films made by Hammer—basically a study of the company through the eyes

ABOVE: Raquel Welch (seen here in 1966's *ONE MILLION YEARS B. C.*) takes part in the new Hammer documentary. BELOW: *FLESH AND BLOOD* producer Ted Newsom puts Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee (and, from the evidence in Cushing's hands, Sylvester the Cat) through their narrative paces.

Photos: Harry Nadler



HAMMER HORROR STRIKES BACK!

by Bruce G. Hallenbeck and Tony Earnshaw

Some things never die: old soldiers, miniskirts, **THE BRADY BUNCH**... and Hammer Films. Just when you fear you've seen the last of them, they rise like Dracula from the ashes.

Hammer's latest incarnation comes courtesy of a deal struck with Warner Bros. and Richard Donner/Lauren-Shular Donner Productions. Hammer's influence was clearly seen in Donner's first hit movie **THE OMEN** (1976), and it turns out that he's a big fan of the company, as is Shuler-Donner. And, of course, it was Warner Bros. who startled America by releasing Hammer's first Gothic smash **THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN** (1957), breaking box-office records in the process.

Hammer is now operated by Roy Skeggs, who produced several of the company's later theatrical features, including **FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL** (1973). Richelle Wilder, vice president of Hammer, gave *Scarlet Street* word on the latest flurry of activity.

"What we've got," Wilder revealed, "is a deal at Warner Bros. for remaking the library of Hammer Films, which is about 240 films. Warner Bros. has set us up here; we are partners with Richard and Lauren Donner."

Initially announced as first on the agenda was a remake of **THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT** (1956), known in the States as **THE CREEPING UNKNOWN**. The screenplay is being written by Dan (ALIEN) O'Bannon. Rumors have been rife that either Sean Connery or Anthony Hopkins is being sought to play the role of Professor Bernard Quatermass—a casting coup that would send the project, like the Professor's rockets, into the stratosphere.

But then, as Wilder explained, "They'll be top quality—'A' writers, 'A' directors, 'A' talent."

Wilder also mentioned that, apart from the Warners deal, Hammer is seeking financing for **VLAD THE IMPALER**, a script that has been floating around since the 1970s. Renewed interest in the project is probably due to the worldwide success of **BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA** (1992).

While a number of the projects announced by Hammer are remakes—there's also a new version of Val Guest's 1961 sci-fi classic **THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE** pending—the most interesting part of

the deal with Warners may be that there are several new stories as well.

"**THE HISS** is being written by John Harrison," Wilder said. "It's a novel that Hammer bought but never produced, so that's totally new. It's about a boy who can speak with the dead."

It may surprise some that Hammer is still alive. The company has actually been around since the 30s, and has gone through a number of permutations.

Hammer began when a Spanish entrepreneur named Enrique Carreras bought a chain of cinemas in London. Carreras went into partnership with William Hinds, a vaudeville performer who worked under the

stage name of Will Hammer—a name he used because he performed in an area of London called Hammersmith. The two men formed a distribution company called Exclusive Films in 1935, and Hammer Productions started as the production arm of Exclusive Films.

It became a family business when Carreras' son James (later Sir James) and grandson Michael joined the company. Hinds' son Anthony also got on board.

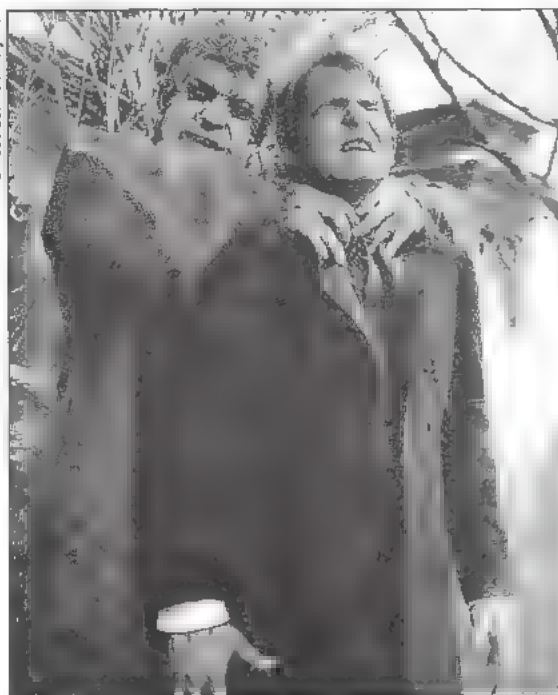
Hammer's first production was **THE PUBLIC LIFE OF HENRY THE EIGHTH** (1935), a takeoff on the Charles Laughton success **THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HENRY THE EIGHTH**. In 1936 came a picture called **THE MYSTERY OF THE MARIE CELESTE** (aka **PHANTOM SHIP**), starring Bela Lugosi.

This early version of Hammer phased out in the late 30s, when film production in Britain pretty much came to a halt because of a little thing called

World War II. It wasn't until 1947 that Hammer Film Productions, Ltd., was officially born, at which point the company started producing a series of grade-B programmers for Exclusive Films.

In the early 50s, Hammer forged a partnership deal with Robert Lippert Productions, which gave them release rights in America. Then, in 1955, they hit paydirt with **THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT**, followed a mere two years later by the film that changed the face of modern horror: **THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN**. In 1958 came the even more influential **HORROR OF DRACULA**, and the rest is horror history.

Continued on page 20



Like the Undead, you can't keep a good horror factory down. Hammer (represented here by 1966's **PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES**) returns!

HAMMER HORROR

Continued from page 19

A lot of people think the company died in the late 70s, when the Gothic horror boom faded, but in reality, Hammer simply changed hands. Skeggs bought the company from Michael Camerons, who had taken it over from his father in 1972. *THE LADY VANISHES* (1979) was the last—to date—theatrical Hammer Film. It was a box-office failure, despite a star cast that included Cybil Shepherd, Elliot Gould, and Angela Lansbury. In 1980, the "new" Hammer produced a 13-episode TV series called *THE HAMMER HOUSE OF HORROR*. American TV censorship pretty much killed its potential over here, and in 1984 a followup series (and a much more tepid one) called *THE HAMMER HOUSE OF MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE* was produced, again with no great degree of success.

During the past decade, Hammer has been living off its royalty checks. But now it seems that, at last, the company is back and potentially bigger than ever.

Yet with every birth there is pain. Sadly, Michael Carreras passed away recently of cancer. Roy Ward Baker, who directed many Hammer hits, including 1968's *FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH* and 1972's *DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE*, told *Scarlet Street* that, by the time he directed *THE LEGEND OF THE SEVEN GOLDEN VAMPIRES* (1974), "Hammer was very much coming to its end. It was running out of steam and it did need a fresh approach. Not necessarily very drastically different, but it did need a change of direction—because the gold mine they'd founded all those years ago was pretty well exhausted."

"Michael, I think, was right. He analyzed it; he must have thought it all out and decided that it was no use just trying to revive the spirit of Hammer. The thing would be to take it in a new direction."

Carreras tried valiantly to revive the company in the mid-70s. *TO THE DEVIL A DAUGHTER* (1976) was Hammer's most expensive production to date, and a box-office failure. Projects such as *VAMPIRELLA* and *NESSIE* never got off the ground. After the failure of *THE LADY VANISHES*, Carreras was forced to sell the company to Skeggs.

The new regime has some kind words to say about Carreras, though. Wilder said of Carreras' death: "It's a tremendous shame; he was involved with the company's product from the company's inception as a production entity, and it's a real pity. It's the end of an era, really. Hammer was like a family; everybody who worked on the production worked not just on one, but on many. Michael Carreras not only worked on them, but he was involved in the project from the word 'go' until the final result. He was the last link with the Carreras family."

Still, the celluloid child of the Carreras family carries on, bereaved yet looking toward a future that seems bright—not only for Hammer Films, but for those of us who love good Gothic thrills. The film business has changed drastically in the past few years, and it remains to be seen how Hammer's approach will fare in these troubled times.

We need some good horror movies, though. So let's wish them the best.



Kenneth Branagh stars as MARY SHELLEY'S FRANKENSTEIN.

NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 16

The Lynch mob—the father/daughter directing team of David and Jennifer—will create a series of promotional spots for The Sci-Fi Channel. They may also produce original long-form programming for the cable TV network.... A new French/Canadian animated series, *NIGHT HOOD*, is in the works, based on tales of roguish robber Arsene Lupin.... Sunday nights on NBC will be presented in Spielberg-Vision this fall, with the new series *EARTH II* immediately preceding the returning *SEAQUEST DSV*. Meanwhile, also on Sunday, *LOIS & CLARK: THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN* will again fly

high on ABC. In the season's finale, Phyllis Coates (*THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN*'s first Lois Lane) played Lois' dotting mom. Now, where's Jack Larson and Noel Neill?

The wartime propaganda short subjects that Alfred Hitchcock directed in 1944 have been like lost treasure to fans and collectors. Now the half-hour suspense featurettes *BON VOYAGE* and *ADVENTURE MALGACHE* are available on home video. These long-unseen French language mini-masterpieces were restored and newly subtitled by The British Film Institute and are available from Milestone Film and Video.

Back on tape from Warner Home Video is the 1984 adventure *GREYSTOKE: THE LEGEND OF TARZAN*. Out of print for several years, this new release includes restored footage of Rick Baker's marvelous apes, and a previously cut jungle outpost scene with Christopher Lambert and Ian Holm.

Already lurking on the home video rental racks this summer are *PELLICAN BRIEF* from Warner Home Video; fast-paced Italian thriller *FLIGHT OF THE INNOCENT* from MGM; *JERICHO FEVER*, a Paramount suspenser about a rampaging

virus; and *THEY WATCH*, an excellent ghost story from Columbia Home Video, originally seen on Showtime.

Coming to video in July: *BLINK* from Columbia, starring a visually-impaired Madeline Stowe, and *BODY SNATCHERS* from Warners, starring a vegetably-impaired Meg Tilly. July also brings *LURKING FEAR* to your video store (the latest Lovecraft adaptation from Charles Band and Full Moon/Paramount); Polygram's *ROMEO IS BLEEDING*, featuring Gary Oldman and Lena Olin; and *THE HIDDEN 2*, a direct-to-video release from New Line/Columbia.

A "special edition" of the smash-hit ABC miniseries *THE STAND* will arrive in stores in August from Republic Home Video. (What we've all been waiting for: another Rob Lowe video!) Prepare now for a triple-threat video onslaught in October, when *SNOW WHITE*, *JURASSIC PARK*, and *THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS* arrive in a pre-holiday panic.

A final farewell to George Peppard, Telly Savalas, Frances Gifford, Dack Rambo, Gwen Watford, Timothy Carey, Royal Dano, Lynn Frederick, and Gilbert Roland.



BEST VEIDT SPECIAL EVER!

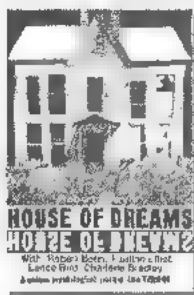
SAVE \$5 ON EACH OF THESE THREE TITLES!

WEIRD TALES (1919) also known as *Unheimliche Geschichten*. An extremely rare film from director Richard Oswald (father of famed director Gerd Oswald). Veidt and Anika Berber star in this compilation of stories, one of which is Poe's "The Black Cat." The quality of this film is not very good, but it is impossible to find elsewhere. We have translated the German titles to English and added credits. An LSVideo exclusive that is listed as being a lost film in the reference books. Highly recommended! **NOW ONLY \$14.95**

THE HANDS OF ORLAC (1925) Conrad Veidt, Anika Berber. If you've seen the standard American version of this film, throw it away! This one contains at least "ripped and torn from someone's nightmare," as one critic put it. See Cesare the somnambulist, twenty more minutes of footage.

There were two versions of the film, one German and one Russian, that account for most of our version. We took these two versions and cut them together, translating all the titles to English. This took a great deal of care because there were bits of scenes missing from one print or the other. The result is a film that is coherent at last. They're from video masters, not film. It's a little rough in places, comparable in quality to our releases of *Weird Tales* and *The Student of Prague*. No other company would ever have expended the time and effort to bring you a film like this. **NOW ONLY \$14.95**

THE STUDENT OF PRAGUE (1926) Conrad Veidt. A rare exclusive! We have translated a German original of this classic silent. Veidt plays Baldern, a poor student who unknowingly sells his soul to the Devil. Some great fencing scenes and many interesting special effects. Don't let this one remain a name in your reference books. Pick up a copy. The quality is a bit shaky, but it is mastered from the best print we could locate. **NOW ONLY \$14.95**



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independent films on one
tape! House is a rare film
directed by Robert Berry,
who also stars. It's an eer-
thriller with a twist ending

and lots of weird photography. Mastered from 35mm. Also on the tape is *Dementia 13*, one of Francis Ford Coppola's early films. William Campbell of Star Trek fame stars. Watch for a great deal of moody shots and that cheap but effective Corman look. Just for fun, we're sticking in a few old drive-in commercials that we thought you'd enjoy. Only **\$19.95**

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- ▼ **YUKON JAKE** (1924) Ben Turpin
- ▼ **NO MORE DOUGH** (1927) Billy West
- ▼ **THOSE AWFUL HATS** (1908) D. W. Griffith
- ▼ **THE WHISPERING SHADOW** (1933) Chapter 2 Boris Lugos
- ▼ **KING OF THE KONGO** (1929) Chapter 2 Boris Karioff
- ▼ **SNAFUPERMAN** (1943) Pvt. Snafu cartoon
- ▼ **BODDY TRAPS** (1944) Pvt. Snafu cartoon
- ▼ **SPIES** (1943) Pvt. Snafu cartoon

Another screamin' deal for just **\$9.95!**

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- ▼ **CURSE OF FLOOR SWEEPINGS** (Telephone Time, more cartoons) \$9.95
- ▼ **FLOOR SWEEPINGS: THE TRUE STORY** (four early TV shows) \$9.95

LSVIDEO BESTSELLER LIST

THE RICHARD BOONE SHOW (1963) Never heard of this show? It ran for one season after "Have Gun, Will Travel" ended. Boone got a bunch of actors together in a stock company and they produced a different play every week. These are great shows, quite unlike most other programs. Here are two of them, both from very rare 16mm prints.

▼ **THE MAFIA MAN** - Boone plays a mobster who turns State's evidence to regain his son's respect. As he is flown under guard from Rome to New York, there are people trying to stop him.

▼ **WELCOME HOME, DAN** - Warren Stevens plays a famous journalist who returns to his home town for a vacation. Only his mother knows the real reason he returned. Both episodes for **\$14.95**.

THE PASSION OF JOAN OF ARC (1928) Directed by Carl Dreyer. It's hard to find Dreyer's films (except *Vampyr* and *Day of Wrath*) but they are always worth seeing. Many critics have said that Renée Faconelli's performance is among the finest ever committed to film. Watch for the typical Dreyer touches with lighting and camera work here. From a rare 16mm print. **\$14.95**

DER GOLEM (1920) Paul Wegener, Lyda Salmonova. A rabbi creates a giant clay statue and, through sorcery, brings it to life in order to help the troubled Jews in Prague. It eventually causes more trouble than good, but the rabbi has difficulty destroying it. This is a sequel to the 1914 film of the same title, and it is an early classic of the German silent film. The mannequins of the Golem are said to be the inspiration for Boris Karloff's portrayal of the monster in *Frankenstein* (1931). From a good 16mm print. **\$14.95**

GOLD (1934) Brigitte Helm, Hans Albers. German, no subtitles. A rare film made after the heyday of German cinema, but by no means dull. Albers is a scientist looking for gold. Some outstanding lab scenes, rivaling anything from the Universal films. Portions of this were used in Curt Siodmak's *Magnetic Monster* (1953). **\$11.95**

THE DARK HOUR (1936) Ray Walker, Irene Ware, Hedda Hopper, E.E. Clive. A rare bit of film from Chesterfield studios and complete with the seldom-seen Chesterfield logo, this is one of the famous "Forgotten Horrors." It's a murder mystery of the '30s ilk, meaning it's loaded with black corridors and red herrings. The cast is unusually strong with two Universal regulars (Ware and Clive) and it is directed by Charles Lamont, who directed zillions of films both before and after this one. From a very rare, original 16mm print. The print has some splices near the beginning of each reel, but is fine otherwise. Just **\$14.95**

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The Shadow

Before *The Batman*, there was *The Shadow*, a mysterious vigilante whose occult powers and relentless pursuit of justice made him a scourge of evil—and a hero to millions of radio listeners, comic-book and pulp-magazine readers, and movie fans. (For more on *The Shadow*, see this issue's **MURDER BY RADIO** and **COMIC CORNER**.)

Now, Universal has brought *THE SHADOW* back to the screen in the star persona of Alec Baldwin. Joining Baldwin (who, of course, also plays *The Shadow*'s alter ego, Lamont Cranston) is Penelope Ann Miller as Margo Lane, John Lone as the villainous Shiwan Khan, Peter Boyle as Shadow agent Moe Shrevnitz, Ian McKellen as Reinhardt Lane, Jonathan Winters as Commissioner Barth, and Tim Curry as Farley Claymore.

THE SHADOW was written by David Koepp and directed by Russell Mulcahy.

On these pages you'll find some scenes from the new production—plus a few Shadows of the past.

Photo: Ralph Nelson



Alec Baldwin as *The Shadow*



Photo: Ralph Nelson



ABOVE: Penelope Ann Miller as the glamorous Margo Lane. BELOW: Makeup artist Carl Fullerton "nose" Alec Baldwin as *The Shadow*.

Photo: Ralph Nelson



The first of Monogram's three *Shadow* features was *THE SHADOW RETURNS* (1946), starring Kane Richmond. As with most Monogram mysteries, much of the film's action was confined to a single house—although the film did contain an atmospheric opening scene, set in a graveyard.

Kane Richmond takes out yet another hapless evildoer in this action scene from 1946's *THE SHADOW RETURNS*. In this film, the crusading crimefighter wears a mask instead of his familiar scarf.



Kane Richmond was The Shadow in Monogram's **BEHIND THE MASK** (1946). Barbara Reed costarred.

Photo: Ralph Nelson



ABOVE: Shiwan Khan (John Lone) pursues his heroic quarry through Chinatown in **THE SHADOW**. **BELOW:** **THE SHADOW**'s prime baddies (Tim Curry and John Lone) are at each other's throats instead of Lamont Cranston's.

Photo: Ralph Nelson



TOPPS CARDS **THE SHADOW**

For more than 60 years, The Shadow has skulked about the mystery scene as an icon of noir vigilantism. In that time, the character has been portrayed in comics, movies, books, magazines, and on radio.

This summer's release of **THE SHADOW** opens the floodgates again for a new flurry of related media. Leading the pack: Topps has produced an exclusive, limited-edition Shadow Deluxe Gold Movie Card Series.

The 90-card set features breathtaking interpretations of The Shadow by the top talent in comics. The card-fronts have paintings by such artists as Mike Kaluta, Jon J. Muth, Matt Wagner, Mark Chiarello, Kent Williams, Geof Darrow, and Howard Chaykin (whose work is pictured above). The backs are written by Shadow experts Anthony Tollin and Joel Goss, who offer glimpses into the character's rich history.

While some artists based their interpretations on the new movie, others dug deep into The Shadow's shady past. "When word got out to the Shadow fans that I'd been tapped to do the comic, a wealth of info flooded into my studio, including the one pulp cover on which I based my visualization of The Shadow: *The Shadow Magazine*, Nov. 1, 1936, the cover for 'Partners in Peril,'" says Kaluta, who wrote the latest series being published by Dark Horse Comics.

"I always try to tell a story in my cards; I like setting a scene," says painter Bo Hampton, one of many artists who captured the despair of our crime-stained streets.

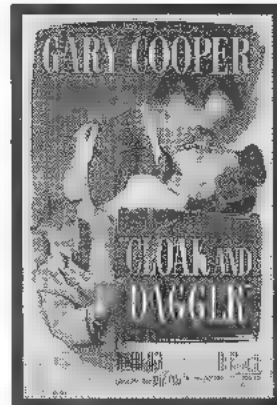
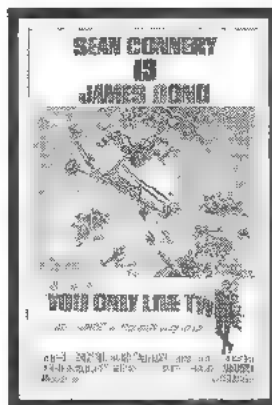
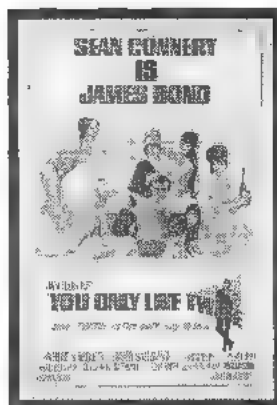
As an added treat, Topps inserts "Shadow Legend" foil printed cards, reprinting the covers of Shadow paperbacks painted by illustrator Jim Steranko. An eight-card subset presents images from the Dark Horse Shadow miniseries "In the Coils of the Leviathan," by Kaluta.

—Buddy Scalera

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THOSE FABULOUS MUSICALS

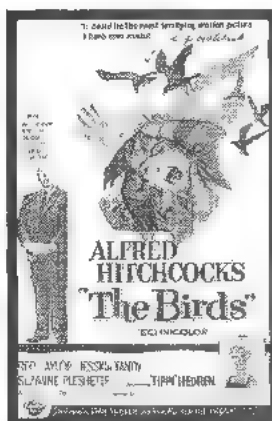
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Guest Shots

VAL GUEST

interviewed by
Tom Weaver
Michael Brunas
Richard Scrivani



Photo courtesy of Val Guest

England's Hammer Films may be most widely known today for their Dracula and Frankenstein movies, but in the days before Christopher Lee donned his vampire fangs and before Peter Cushing despoiled his first grave, the company leaned toward science-fiction and produced three of its best motion pictures: 1955's *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* (U. S. title: *THE CREEPING UNKNOWN*), 1957's *QUATERMASS 2* (*ENEMY FROM SPACE*), and 1957's *THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN* (*THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN OF THE HIMALAYAS*). All were based on BBC television serials by writer Nigel Kneale and, just as importantly, all were adapted for the screen and directed by Val Guest, a reluctant dabbler in sci-fi whose remarkable aptitude made these films—and Guest himself—classic fan favorites. Returning to the genre in 1961, he added to his canon what many consider his best-ever film: *THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE*.

Born in London in 1911, Guest began his career as an actor on the British stage and in early sound films. He ran the one-man London office of *The Hollywood Reporter* until an encounter with director Marcel Varnel led to a screenwriting job at Gainsborough Studios. Guest's directing career began in the early 1940s with a Ministry of Information short about the perils of sneezing—an inauspi-

cious start to a lengthy roster of films which includes *CASINO ROYALE* (1967) and *WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH* (1970).

Scarlet Street: Your entry into science-fiction was *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* in 1954.

Val Guest: And I very nearly didn't enter at all, because at first I wasn't going to make it. I wasn't interested. I think I was one of the very few people in the whole of England who hadn't seen the television series upon which it was based. [Hammer producer] Tony Hinds called just as my wife Yolande and I were going on holiday to Tangier, and he said, "We want to do a film of *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*. Would you like to make it?" I said, "Well, I don't know anything about it." He said, "Look, I'll let you have all the television scripts. I'll wrap them up for you, and you take 'em to Tangier and read 'em"—he wanted me to make a script out of it. So he met us at the airport and gave us this great bundle of nine scripts, which I could well have done without on the plane. (Laughs) In Tangier, I put it at the side of the bed, and it was there for a week. Yolande said to me one day, "What's this down here?" and I told her it was a science-fiction thing Tony Hinds wanted me to do. She asked me, "Have you read it?" and I said, "No, no—that's not me! I'm no

good for that sort of thing." And she said, "Well, read it. Since when have you been ethereal?" I couldn't answer that at all, so I said, "All right, I'll read it." Well, I read it—I plowed through it. I took it onto the beach with me, and I got absolutely hooked on it. I called Tony Hinds and said that, yes, I'd do it. That's how I got onto *QUATERMASS*. Except for Yolande, I would never have done it.

SS: What made Hammer think of you for *QUATERMASS*?

VG: I don't know. I'd done quite a lot of films for Hammer already, and they kept coming to me now and then about all sorts of things.

SS: Part of the funding for the movie came from an American producer named Robert Lippert.

VG: Robert Lippert was one of the—I don't want to say Poverty Row producers, but you know what I mean. He was one of the small, independent producers working in Hollywood. Jimmy Carreras used to do quite a bit of work with Bob, and Bob used to give Jimmy distribution of some kind in the early days of Hammer. Lippert was a nice enough guy. He had a girlfriend called Margia Dean, who I was asked to put into the film; she was a sweet girl, but she couldn't act.

SS: Is Margia Dean overdubbed throughout the movie?

VG: What probably happened was that she was not very understand-



Photo courtesy of Val Guest

LEFT: Professor Quatermass (Brian Donlevy) looks with apprehension at the sole survivor of a three-astronaut mission in *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* (1955). **RIGHT:** Val Guest gives Brian Donlevy the lowdown on the next scene in *QUATERMASS 2* (1957). **NEXT PAGE:** Richard Wordsworth was unforgettable as the tragic astronaut who (as the American title for *QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* had it) became *THE CREEPING UNKNOWN*.

able, and the sound was bad, too. We did an awful lot of that film on location, and in those days Hammer didn't really have the power to stop Windsor Castle and everything. We post-synched a lot of people.

SS: What part of *QUATERMASS* was shot in Windsor Castle?

VG: Not in the Castle, in the city of Windsor. In the shadow of the castle, yes; in fact, we were about 100 yards away when we shot the scene of Richard Wordsworth breaking in to the pharmacy.

SS: Was there American money in most early Hammer films?

VG: Yes, there was. Jimmy Carreras was an incredible man. He would suddenly go to the art department and say, "Do me a picture with a dinosaur and a girl in its mouth," and the art department would come up with a great big, flamboyant poster. Then Jimmy would send it over to Lippert, or whoever he was working with at the time, and say, "How 'bout a picture about this?" That was how he set up his pictures. He did that for *ONE MILLION YEARS, B. C.*, he did that for *WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH*....

SS: Lippert's associate, Richard Landau, gets screen credit for the *QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* script.

VG: Exactly what Dick Landau did was this: As we were working for the American market, when I had done my script, they would pass it to Dick and say, "If there's anything you want to Americanize, do it." So if I had put "got," he would put "gotten." It was sheer nonsense! And this became a "coscript!" I can only tell you that, on all the copies of the film

that I've seen, my name is there and Landau's is not. But when we made it, I remember either Mike Carreras or Tony Hinds saying, "Look, Dick Landau says that he ought to have his name on this. He's going to take it up with the Writers Guild." I said, "Oh, Christ, who cares? If it means that much to him, put his name on." I was told later that in America it only had Richard Landau's name on it!

SS: Did you have any input from Nigel Kneale on the first Quatermass picture?

VG: Now, it's a strange thing about Nigel; I hear from all sorts of places that he's terribly unhappy about all his films. I don't know why that should be—maybe a hurt ego over the fact that some of his stuff had to be cut. For instance, when we did *THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN*, we let Nigel do the whole script. But, as I had to direct it, I had the final say, and I had to do all sorts of nips and tucks. A brilliant writer, but one who writes stuff as though you were reading it in a book. An attention span, especially that of a science-fiction audience, is not all that big. (Laughs) So you have to make it more concise. And I don't think he was very happy with that film, either, even though he got sole credit on the screenplay. But I honestly am sad about the situation with Nigel. He's a brilliant guy, and he's had an enormous success with these things—and he hates every minute of them. There's something rather twisted there, and it's sad that he doesn't enjoy the fruits of it all.

SS: If he disliked the film versions of his teleplays, why did he keep going back to Hammer?

VG: Money. He seemed to have a chip on his shoulder, Nigel. At the beginning, he had a chip on his shoulder because he was not a screenplay writer, and they wouldn't let him write the screenplay. Therefore, automatically, everybody who was going to touch that piece of work was going to be a butcher.

SS: Watching your Quatermass movies, we're struck by the overlapping dialogue, the realistic style. What directors and films influenced you?

VG: I remember saying, when I told Tony Hinds I'd do *QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*, "But only if I can do it my way. I would like to shoot it as though a television company had said, 'Go on out and cover this story.'" I must say, to Tony's credit, that he said that would be all right. I wanted it to look as though it was filmed by hand-held cameras; we didn't have to frame somebody absolutely in the middle—make it real. Now, the person who had influenced me there was Elia Kazan, who, when he made *PANIC IN THE STREETS*, did virtually that same thing. I was terribly impressed with that. And I think that's the thing that put the germ into my head. I've used that technique on an awful lot of movies, not just science-fiction.

SS: And the rapid dialogue?

VG: To me, there's nothing worse than hearing question-and-answer, question-and-answer. Also, it gives you pace. I think an awful lot of British films lacked pace in the old days—that was one of our faults.

SS: Did your cast have problems with it?

VG: At the beginning, yes, there were a few heels dug in. Once they

realized what we were doing, once they'd been to the dailies and seen what we were trying to get at, there wasn't a problem, no. They were rather excited about it.

SS: *Howard Hawks was famous for his use of overlapping dialogue. Did he inspire you?*

VG: No. I admire Howard Hawks' work, but it doesn't ring a bell with me. Another person who did it, of course, was Orson Welles. If you are doing "reality," in reality none of us wait for someone to finish the complete sentence. That is all part of the *cinema verite*, the reportage—whatever you want to call it. Making you feel you're there.

SS: *Speaking of other directors, you worked with Alfred Hitchcock.*

VG: I worked with Hitch on *THE LADY VANISHES* and things like that, because his office was next door to mine in the old Gainsborough Studios. We all used to work on each other's films there. Hitch used to say, "Give me five 'gizmicks,'" and we would think up five particularly startling moments—"gizmicks" was his word for that. Then he'd say, "Now find me five unbelievable locations." And that is how he would start his films, by finding an unusual location and these "bumps," as we used to call them. Then the script was developed to bring in these "bumps," the locations and everything. He used to work very hard at that, and then Hitch would draw every single shot at the side in his script. And when he had done that, he would say, "Oh, shit, now I gotta make it." He hated making films. He loved preparing them; he loved getting right up to the first day of shooting, and then he'd have been thrilled if someone else would then take over. He was an extraordinary, fantastic man.

SS: *What did you do on THE LADY VANISHES?*

VG: What happened at Gainsborough was, there were four of us under contract as writers: Sidney Gilliat, Frank Launder, myself, and a fellow called Marriott Edgar, who was my writing partner. And every script would go around.

Frank and Sidney wrote the *LADY VANISHES* screenplay, and that screenplay was pushed onto us. The comedies that Marriott Edgar and I wrote were pushed onto Frank and Sidney. We read each other's scripts and added and suggested. Then, on *THE LADY VANISHES*, I also spent a lot of time down on the set.

SS: *Did more money go into THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT than into a run-of-the-mill Hammer?*

VG: I don't really think so, no. On these *Hammers*, there were never any locations to speak of; most of it was done on the lot at Bray Studios. There was an old, empty hotel next door where they'd make all the "spooky" things—they used that in a million films. We were all very tight for money on *QUATERMASS*, and I think that we had probably gone a little over because of weather problems, shooting in Windsor and at Whipsnade Zoo. That was about 25 miles away—that's a big location for Hammer!

(Laughs) I remember on the next-to-last day of the shooting on *QUATERMASS*, my assistant came to me and said, "You know, you haven't got Jack Warner tomorrow, guv." I said, "Why?"

He said, "Tony Hinds won't pay for him." I said, "But he's a main character!" Jack played the cop who was in charge of the investigation throughout the whole film, and now he wasn't going to be around for the denouement! The assistant said, "Well, Tony won't pay for him, he hasn't got the money to pay his daily rate." I said, "You write your star out because you haven't got the money to pay for the last day's shooting? That's absolute nonsense! Call Jack Warner, on my authority, and tell Tony Hinds that I will pay for his last day out of my salary." And that's what happened. I didn't end up paying out of my salary, no; Tony picked it up, but I really had to threaten that. Otherwise, we would not have had the end of that story! It would have been played with bit players!

SS: *Was Hinds more interested in money than product?*

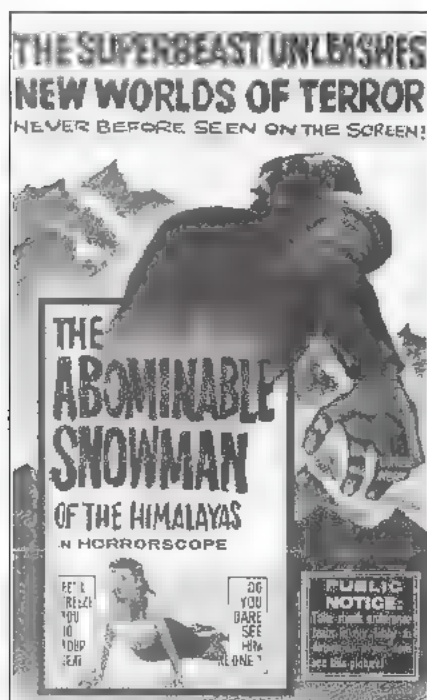
VG: Strange thing about Tony. Tony used to write an awful lot of those thrillers and horrors and things, under an assumed name—and he loved the business. But when he was producing, he was much more money-minded. It was just one of those things. But I was great friends with Tony long after that—we got over that squabble.

SS: *Did you have much say in casting?*

VG: Yes, I did. I had no say about the American stars who were given to us by the U. S. investors, but on the other people I did. In fact, I used to have a sort of "rep" company that I used from one picture to another. I used to write little bits in for them in each film,

and if they knew it was coming up, they'd try and keep themselves clear. We had some great people in those early days, people who became stars—Leo McKern and Sid James and people like that.

SS: *As the afflicted astronaut, Richard Wordsworth gives one of the best performances in THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT.*



LEFT: "He'll freeze you to your seat!" warned the ads for *THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN* (1957). RIGHT: Brian Donlevy pours over his *QUATERMASS* script under the sober eye of costar Jack Warner.

VG: He was very good, yes. He came from the Royal Shakespeare Company, and that was his very first film. I thought he had the right gaunt face. He never stopped laughing, throughout the years afterwards, saying that his very first appearance in a film was his hands coming out the door from inside a rocket, pulling himself up and getting 23 hoses worth of water right in his face! (Laughs) That scene was shot at Bray. The gnarled old tree that we

propped the rocket up against is still there. And the little girl in *QUATERMASS* turned into Jane Asher, who nearly married Paul McCartney.

SS: What was your budget and schedule?

VG: Oh, nothing that Hammer ever did was much more than £90,000. The shooting was never more than about two, three weeks at the most.

SS: What do you think of the special effects on *QUATERMASS*?

VG: I thought dear old Les Bowie, who we used to employ from picture

to picture, was brilliant. He would do "everything for nothing," because he was told he had nothing, and he worked like mad. He later did my special effects on *THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE*. Les was a wonderful craftsman. He did it all, practically in his own garage, and never failed to come up with something.

SS: *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* reportedly scared a boy to death in Illinois.

LEFT: Location scenes helped make *THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE* (1962) unsettlingly realistic. RIGHT: Val Guest directs Forrest Tucker and Peter Cushing in *THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN* (1957).



Photo courtesy of Dick Klemmisen

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WIDESCREEN

BAY OF BLOOD

Mario Bava's uncult in widescreen.

BELLE DE JOUR

Luis Bunuel's with Catherine Deneuve. Subtitled

1967

BETTY BLUE

Full uncult extended version

THE BEYOND

Lucio Fulci's best. Uncult & widescreen

BITTER MOON

Polanski's newest, with

Peter Coyote

BLOOD FROM THE

MUMMY'S TOMB

Hammer horror 1972

BULLET FOR THE

GENERAL

Damiano Damiani's

western. Widescreen 1966

CANNIBAL MAN

Slaughter House worker

goes nuts. Uncult. Spain

CITY OF THE LIVING DEAD

Lucio Fulci's Gates Of Hell

COUNTLESS DRACULA

Uncult Hammer with Ingrid Pitt. 1970

CUL-DE-SAC

Roman Polanski's uncult comedy

DAIRY OF A CHAMBERMAID

Luis Bunuel's widescreen. Subtitled 1964

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Visconti's widescreen directors cut.

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DEMONIAC

Widescreen Franco

DEMONS OF THE MIND

Hammer horror with Patsy

Magee

THE DEVIL RIDES OUT

uncult Hammer aka The

Devils Bride 1968

DRACULA A D 1972

uncult Hammer horror

DRACULA LOVE NEVER

DIES

Widescreen

DRACULA PRINCE OF DARKNESS

uncult Hammer 1965

DRAGONS FOREVER

Jackie Chan, dubbed.

DR. CRIPPEN

Donald Pleasence and Samantha Eggar

DR. JEKYLL & SISTER HYDE

Hammer horror with Ralph Bates

DJANGO STRIKES AGAIN

Widescreen sequel to Django with Franco Nero

DUST DEVIL

Richard Stanley's 105 min. uncult version

FACES

John Cassavetes 1968

FACE TO FACE

Spaghetti Western widescreen

FASCINATION

Jean Rollin's best widescreen, with Bridget

Lahare. Subtitled

FEMALE VAMPIRE

Jess Franco's widescreen Bare Breasted

Countess. 1973

FIVE DOLLS FOR AN AUGUST MOON

Mario Bava with Edwige Fenech. Dubbed

widescreen

FLAVIA THE HERETIC

Uncult widescreen and dubbed.



FRANKENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED

Uncult Hammer horror 1969

GHOSTS OF THE CIVIL DEAD

Australian prison flick with Nick Cave 1988

GOD OF GAMBLERS

Hong Kong action widescreen in English

GREENAWAY EARLY WORKS

3 shorts from Peter

GREENAWAY

Live action Japanese sci-fi

HANDS OF THE RIPPER

Hammer horror with Eric Porter

HARD BOILED

John Woo's best, uncult with great dubbing

HEAVY METAL

Wild animation & Music

HOMMES ET UN COFFIN

Spaghetti western

HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM

A rarity. In color with

Michael Gough.

HORROR OF

FRANKENSTEIN

Hammer horror with Ralph

Bates

HOUSE BY THE

CEMETERY

Lucio Fulci's uncult

widescreen

INFERNO

Dario Argento's widescreen uncult

JACK BE NIMBLE

New Zealand Lynch meets Chainsaw Massacre

KEOMA THE VIOLENT BREED

Franco Nero, spaghetti western. Widescreen

KILL AND PRAY

Carlo Lizzani's widescreen western with Lou

Lizzani. 1967

THE KILLER

Woo's widescreen, with great dubbing.

KILLER NUN

Anita Ekberg and Joe Dallesandro. Widescreen

Italy

KISS ME MONSTER

Jess Franco's sequel to Sadisterotica

LA GRANDE BOUFFE

Marco Ferreri's Blow Out. French with English

subtitles

LA VAMPIRE NUE

Jean Rollin's uncult The Nude Vampire dubbed.

LE FRISON DES VAMPIRES

Jean Rollin's uncult Thrill of the Vampires

dubbed

LE SAMOURAI

Jean-Pierre Melville with Alain Delon.

Subtitled 1967

LE VIOL DU VAMPIRE

Early widescreen Rollin

LISA AND THE DEVIL

Mario Bava's uncult

widescreen. 1972

THE LIVING DEAD

GIRL

Jean Rollin's best and

most violent. Subtitled in

English. Widescreen

LOST N TIME

Wild twisted sci-fi with

great effects.

LUST FOR A VAMPIRE

Uncult Hammer horror

MAD MAX 1

Uncult widescreen and with original soundtrack

MASTER WITH CRACKED FINGERS

Early dubbed Jackie Chan. Slightly widescreen

MEET THE FEEBLES

Peter Jackson's wild Muppet sex and gore show

MONSTER CITY

Wild japanimation.

MY LUCKY STARS

Dubbed Jackie Chan

THE NANNY

Bette Davis and Hammer

Studios. 1965

THE NORTHERNERS

Twin Peaks style Dutch

black comedy

NOSFERATU THE

VAMPIRE

Herzog's subtitled with

Klaus Kinski.

OMEGA MAN

Widescreen with Charlton Heston

ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.

Hammer & Harryhausen with Raquel, uncult

OPENING NIGHT

John Cassavetes 1977

OPERATION CONDOR

Jackie Chan's Armour of

God 2. Widescreen,

dubbed

PHANTOM OF THE

OPERA

Hammer horror with

Herbert Lom. 1962

PICNIC AT HANGING

ROCK

Peter Weir's uncult 1975

PLAGUE OF THE

ZOMBIES

John Gilling's Hammer horror

POLICE STORY 3

Jackie Chan's newest. Dubbed

PROJECT A

Dubbed Jackie Chan

PROJECT A PART 2

Moro Jackie, also dubbed.

QUATERMASS AND THE PIT

Hammer's third

RASPUTIN THE MAD MONK

Christopher Lee's best

Hammer horror

THE REPTILE

Hammer Films uncult

1966

RETURN OF THE

BUND DEAD

The second one

widescreen

RETURN OF THE

LIVING DEAD

Dan O'Bannon's

widescreen brain-

muncher

REQUIEM FOR A VAMPIRE

Jean Rollin's uncult Caged Virgins widescreen.

1971

REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN & CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB

Hammer double Feature

SADISTEROTICA

Jess Franco

widescreen

SALON KITTY

Tinto Brass,

widescreen, Italy

1976

SATANIC RITES

OF DRACULA

Uncult Hammer

horror

SAVIOUR OF

THE SOUL

Hong Kong action

widescreen in

English

SCARS OF

DRACULA

Uncult Hammer horror Christopher Lee

SEVEN MINUTES

Rare Russ Meyer 1971

SHADOWS

John Cassavetes. 1959

SHOGUN ASSASSIN

One Wolf & Child blood bath

SUCCUBUS

Jess Franco's Necronomicon 1967

TENDER & PERVERSE EMMANUELLE

Widescreen Franco dubbed 1973

TETSUO 2 BODY HAMMER

More frantic action by Shinya Tsukamoto

TWIN DRAGONS

Dubbed Jackie Chan. Directed by Ringo Lam &

Tsu Hark

TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

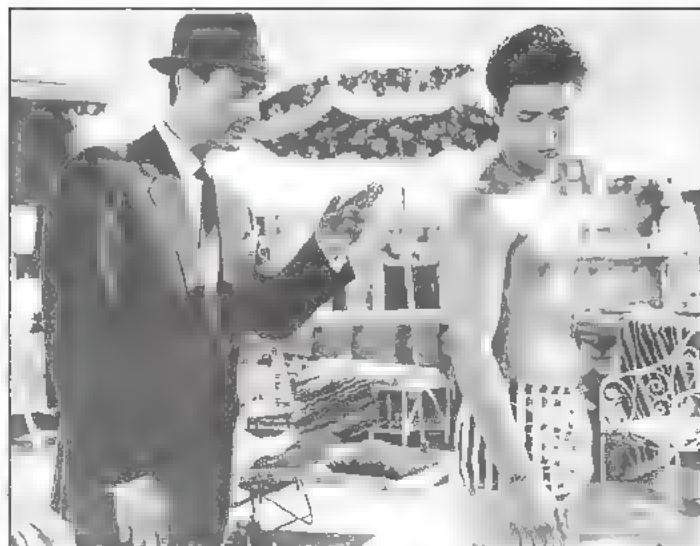
Giuseppe Patroni directs Charlotte Rampling,

Italy

TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD

The first one widescreen

THE TRIPODS VOL. 1-4



© 1960 Continental Distributing, Inc.

EXPRESSO BONGO (1960) starred a singing, dancing Laurence Harvey in the tale of a seedy talent agent who latches onto a good thing in the form of a rockin', rollin' teenager (played by pop star Cliff Richard).

VG: That was in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. I'd be interested to know what Nigel Kneale thinks of that! (Laughs)

SS: How big a hit was the movie for Hammer Studios?

VG: Very big—one of their biggest. In fact, it started them off on that bent. **THE CREEPING UNKNOWN** was the American title. The most wonderful title was the one they used in Germany, and I wish to God we had used it; there it was called **SHOCK**. When I found that out, I thought, "What a hell of a title!"

SS: Growing up, were you a fan of horror and science-fiction movies?

VG: I'd love to say yes, but no—not 'til Tony Hinds said, "Read **QUATERMASS**." I think that is part of the reason why, when somebody asked me to make a horror film, my first reaction was, "Yes, but I want to do it

differently." I tried to "think around it," "think sideways," try and find a different approach to it—to make people who were the way I was want to see it.

SS: You've made only a few science-fiction films and yet you may go down in the record books as a sci-fi director. Is that all right with you?

VG: Yes—sure! Why not? My God, just to "go down in the record books" is all right!

SS: Next—obviously—came **QUATERMASS 2**

VG: Everybody has said that was far and away the best *Quatermass*. I didn't think so. I was very disappointed with **QUATERMASS 2**. I didn't think it was a patch on the first one, because the first one had freshness. **QUATERMASS 2**, I felt, was reaching somehow or other. But, it was very successful.

SS: Did it have a bigger budget?

VG: Yes, a little bigger. We were able to do more location work, and we had a minutely better schedule—I mean, probably another two days or something! (Laughs) We drove down to the Shell Oil Refinery, where we shot a lot of that stuff. That meant that the whole unit had to go down and be put up and paid location pay. The other locations were all based from Hammer, and you drove there in the morning and you drove back at night.

SS: How far must imagination go to make up for the money that's not there?

VG: Having no money means you have to use your head, that's all. The worst thing you can do, going into one of those, is think, "Well, this is a low-budget picture, so they can't expect too much from us." That's fatal. You go into that picture saying,

LEFT and RIGHT: **CASINO ROYALE**'s gallery of Bond-raisers included Daliah Lavi (didn't Carol Channing play her on Broadway?), Woody Allen, John Huston, Charles Boyer, David Niven, William Holden, and Kurt Kasznar.



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"Nobody's going to say this was low-budget!", and you break your skull to try and overcome it. Everybody thinks up ideas that, if you had the lazy, easy advantage of just spending more dough, nobody would have come up with. Take [production designer] Bernie Robinson. I did a film with him called YESTERDAY'S ENEMY, a war film, and we won an awful lot of awards. Our opening in London, at the Empire Cinema, was a big opening for the Burma Star Organization; Lord Louis Mountbatten was the guest of honor and everything. I sat next to Mountbatten during the showing, and he kept nudging me: "I know where you shot that and I cannot think where it was!" Now, it was all shot at Shepperton or Bray, the whole thing! So this was that brilliant little man, Bernie Robinson, who made a jungle on rolling trucks, so that once the actors went through one part of the "jungle," we rolled our trucks and they were in an entirely different part! We built the swamp, the river, everything! And the Burma Star Organization and Lord Louis Mountbatten, who commanded over there, were absolutely convinced, not only that we were there, but that he knew exactly where we were! (Laughs)

SS: One of the best scenes in QUATERMASS 2 has Tom Chatto, playing a nosey investigator, stumbling down the stairs from the top of the giant tank, covered in slime.

VG: Tom Chatto's become a well-known character actor in London, and his wife Ros is one of the top casting directors. I don't know what the hell kind of gunk they made up to smear all over Tom for that scene—jelly, or something that looked like oil. He would come staggering down those steps, I'd say it was okay and my cameraman would say, "I'd like one more." I'd say, "I'm sorry, Tom. One more." And he'd say, "Oh, shit!" (Laughs) He'd have to go all the way up the stairs again and be doused down again at the top, while we cleaned the steps and the tank!

SS: Had you seen the QUATERMASS 2 serial on television?

VG: No. It was far better that I didn't, because then you're not bound by anything; you come in with a fresh eye. It's like an actor who's going to be in A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE going to see the Brando version. Absolutely fatal! Come in with a fresh approach.

SS: What did the British film industry think of Hammer Studios during the mid-50s period?

VG: Well, my feeling about Hammer was that it was one of the happiest "family" studios—I've never met anything like it ever again. That was a wonderful atmosphere. We knew that we had no money, we knew we had to make it look three times what it was costing, and we learned an awful lot of our trade through all that. We would be shooting in a small room and need to get a medium shot, and we'd have to get the cameraman to put his ass in the fireplace! (Laughs) You learned what you could get away with and what you could make things look like, so it was fabulous. I think that the industry looked down on Hammer a little. It was almost a laugh. They did-



n't do it with any derision, it was just "Oh, well, it's a Hammer..."

SS: How did you like working with Brian Donlevy on the Quatermass movies?

VG: Oh, I got on with Brian fine. But so many stories have been concocted since, about how he was paralytic [drunk]. It's absolute balls, because he was not paralytic. He wasn't stone cold sober, either, but he was a pro and he knew his lines. There were times when he didn't know what the story was about, but he would say to me, "Give me a rundown up to here," I'd give it to him, and he'd say, "Fine, fine." I never had any trouble with Brian, no.

SS: Tell us about James Carreras.

VG: Jimmy was a fabulous character, no doubt about that—he had all the energy in the world. Enormous showman, terrific salesman. Didn't know anything about movies, didn't

profess to know anything about movies—but he knew how to sell them and get 'em going. I was very fond of him. But he and his son Michael never got on—that was the sad thing about it. When Michael broke away, he swore that his father stopped him getting jobs. It was all very sad.

SS: What do you recall about the proposed Hammer production of Richard Matheson's I Am Legend?

VG: Mike Carreras was a buddy of mine then, and just becoming a producer around that time. Mike was one of the best producers I have ever worked for, because you knew that if you were out on a lonely moor, that everything you needed was going to be there. You could rely on the guy completely and utterly. He did his homework. Mike brought me the book *I Am Legend* one day and asked, "Do you think we'll ever get away with a film like this?" I said, "Let's try; let's see what we can do." The British censor absolutely said no, under no condition whatsoever would it be allowed. They then tried it on the American censor, and, of course, no again. It was completely blocked on both sides, unless great alterations were made.

SS: What led you to make THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN?

VG: It was something they sent to me; I think they sent me Nigel Kneale's script of it. I thought it was a very good idea, because there was so much in the news about the Abominable Snowman. There'd been so many people going up to the Himalayas: "Yes, we saw it," "No, we didn't." It was a topical thing, and I was very interested in doing that. I went out with doubles and a full unit for a couple of weeks, up into the French Pyrenees, and we shot an awful lot of stuff up there. The rest was done at Pinewood Studios, on one of their vast stages in which Bernie Robinson had done a complete snowscape.

SS: Did any of your actors see the light of day, or were all their outdoor scenes shot on the stage?

VG: I don't think they went out anywhere at all. The Tibetan village was shot out of doors—we built that for the film—but it was on the Bray lot. We had some bloody good lighting cameramen down at Bray. Arthur Grant did so many of my pictures—in fact, I took him away from Bray when I had my own company.

SS: Did you have much input in the photography for your movies?

VG: No, I would leave it to the director of photography. Once we had de-



LEFT: Ever hopeful, Vai Guest tries to communicate with Victoria Vetri on the set of *WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH* (1970). **RIGHT:** Vetri races to the rescue of *DINOSAURS* costar Robin Hawdon, little suspecting that some people enjoy that sort of thing.

cided upon the mood we wanted to create, it was left entirely to him.

SS: What can you tell us about your stars, Forrest Tucker and Peter Cushing?

VG: Oh, Pete is an old chum. There's a man with the most incredible sense of humor. He'll be in the middle of a very dramatic scene, and at the end, when you say cut, he'll suddenly go into a "Knees Up, Mother Brown" dance! And have everybody on the set in hysterics! He's nothing at all like you would expect. Wonderful, great, great character. He was mad about props—we used to call him "Props" Cushing. He would work it all out and not tell you anything about it until the take, and then all these things would start happening. In *ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN*, when they show him the Yeti's tooth, none of us had any idea what was going to go on in that scene. But it sure went on! He took a tape measure out, he scraped the tooth with a nail file, he came up with a magnifying glass—all during the scene, talking the whole time. It was quite hysterical.

SS: He and Tucker were sort of an "odd couple" in that film.

VG: They were complete, complete opposites. Tuck I made two pictures with, *SNOWMAN* and *BREAK IN THE CIRCLE*, and he was a great big schoolboy. In those days, he didn't have a drinking problem—or, if he did, he didn't show it. He was a thorough pro, and I had no problems with him at all.

SS: He really holds up his end of *THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN*.

VG: He was very good. They used to kid each other a lot, Cushing and Tucker. Pete will kid anybody, and Tuck used to kid Peter Cushing. I remember, we did a take and something went wrong, and I said we had to do it again. Tuck said, "Oh, Christ, that's the first time I've ever had to do a second take." And Cushing said, "Well, at least you're not a Method actor. They do it seven or eight times!" (Laughs)

SS: Was it always your intention not to completely show the Yeti?

VG: Oh, absolutely. I refused positively to show the whole thing—I didn't want the audience to see the full figure, to see the full anything. I thought that people were liable to laugh. Let them think they've seen the whole thing, and just let's show bits of it—which is what we did.

SS: Are any of your sci-fi films personal favorites?

VG: *QUATERMASS* and *THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE*. But not the other science-fictions, I'm afraid.

SS: Were you ever tempted to "go Hollywood," as Hitchcock did?

VG: No, not really. I mean, I'd been over here and shot bits and pieces of films that I had to finish for various people—things like *KILLER FORCE*, that I made in Southwest Africa. But there was far too much to do in England. Also, I was in a very lucky position, to be able to write and direct your own movies. And then, every so often, to also produce and write and direct is also good. So, no, I never thought of leaving.

SS: How did you come to direct *EXPRESSO BONGO*, which was based on a British stage musical?

VG: I went to see the musical, and my wife said, "That would be a good film"—and so we bought the rights. Yolande, my wife, was in it, with Cliff Richard and Laurence Harvey. Cliff Richard, who we launched in that, has now sold more platinum and gold disks than anyone in Europe. He was a young boy in it; he wasn't a teen idol then. He was singing in a small coffee bar in London's Soho, and I found him there. The group that played behind him called themselves The Drifters, and I said, "You can't call yourselves that! There are some very famous people in America called The Drifters!" So we retitled them The Shadows and they also have sold I don't know how many million records.

SS: Horror stories abound about Laurence Harvey's behavior. What was your experience with him?

VG: No problem at all. I think Larry Harvey was difficult when he thought people didn't know what they were doing. He was a perfectionist in much the same way that Bette Davis was. Now, I did *ANOTHER MAN'S POISON* with Bette Davis—no problem whatsoever, once you'd gained her confidence. All these stars who are difficult are making a lot trouble in case they're bad the next day in rushes—then they can say, "Well, I told you so." (Laughs)

SS: Whose idea was *THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE*?



LEFT: Jim Dantforth's stop-motion saurians out-acted their human tormentors in Hammer's *WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH* (1970). RIGHT: Cave-couple Robin Hawdon and Victoria Vetri practice the Universal language. Unfortunately for them, the film was released by Warner Brothers.

VG: It was something that had been going around in my head for a long time, that gradually we were fucking up the whole planet. I had always been very interested in what we are liable to do to ourselves without realizing it. We can be an awful bore talking about Greenpeace and this and that. It was like the old Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament—it becomes a bore. And I thought, there must be a way of getting that same story over without being a bore. I wrote out the idea in treatment form about eight years before I made the movie. Every time I made a movie and the producers said, "What do you want to do next," I'd tell them my idea and they'd say "Oh, Christ! No one wants to know about the Bomb!" No one would ever let me do it. For eight years I kept on, and eventually I talked somebody into it: I finally got Sir Michael Balcon and a couple of other people at British Lion Films to say yes—but what I had to do was put up as collateral *EXPRESSO BONGO*, which had made a lot of money and got us a lot of awards.

SS: Did *DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE* have a bigger budget than your other sci-fi pictures?

VG: Do you know what that film cost to make? People just do not believe it. It cost us, in pounds sterling, just under £200,000—which at today's rate is \$500,000. Ludicrously cheap.

SS: It was made by your own company.

VG: Oh, yes, it was a Val Guest Production. The first Val Guest Produc-

tion was *PENNY PRINCESS*, which I made for Rank, with Yolande and Dirk Bogarde. Our company was Yolande, myself, and an actor who was in all our films, a very close friend called Reginald Beckwith—a wonderful comedy character. As we formed that film company, Yolande was in a play in London called *TO DOROTHY A SON*—she and Richard Attenborough, just the two of them on stage all night. We were getting this company together and Dickie Attenborough kept saying, "Can't I come in this? Can't I come in with you?" And we said, "No, Dickie, it's just the three of us. Sorry." "Oh, well, I suppose one day I'll have my own company..." (Laughs)

SS: How did Wolf Mankowitz get involved on *DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE*?

VG: Wolf's been a chum of ours for a long, long time; a very brilliant guy. He's a writer with bite; he will churn out 20 pages which you can whittle down to three brilliant pages. An undisciplined writer, but he has everything going for him. There are certain subjects that you instinctively know he would be absolutely right to come in on. He's living now in Santa Fe—he moved there a long time ago and he's teaching as a professor and writing books and things.

SS: Did you have scientific advisers on the picture?

VG: Certain things that I wanted to know about, I asked certain people, yes, but I didn't have people working

with me. What I did was, when I had the script, I would send it to the weather people—I'd find somebody in a high weather office, and ask them to put me right if I'd used any wrong phrases. Or I would call somebody else and ask, "How long would it take an ice cap melting to get to the Atlantic?" Things like that I would ask—but, no, I didn't have a technical adviser.

SS: Was American money invested?

VG: Not a penny, no. It was all English money. I was able to cast it exactly as I wanted to, without having to take star names, which would have killed it.

SS: Where did you shoot?

VG: All around London. One thing we did was recreate at Shepperton Studios the office of the *Daily Express*. We had so many stills taken of that office, and I said to my art department and my set designer, "Make our set look like that." We copied the *Daily Express* office absolutely, right down to the last piece of paper on the floor. I did three shots only of somebody walking down a passage in the real building; we also shot in the entrance to the *Express* building.

SS: Anywhere else?

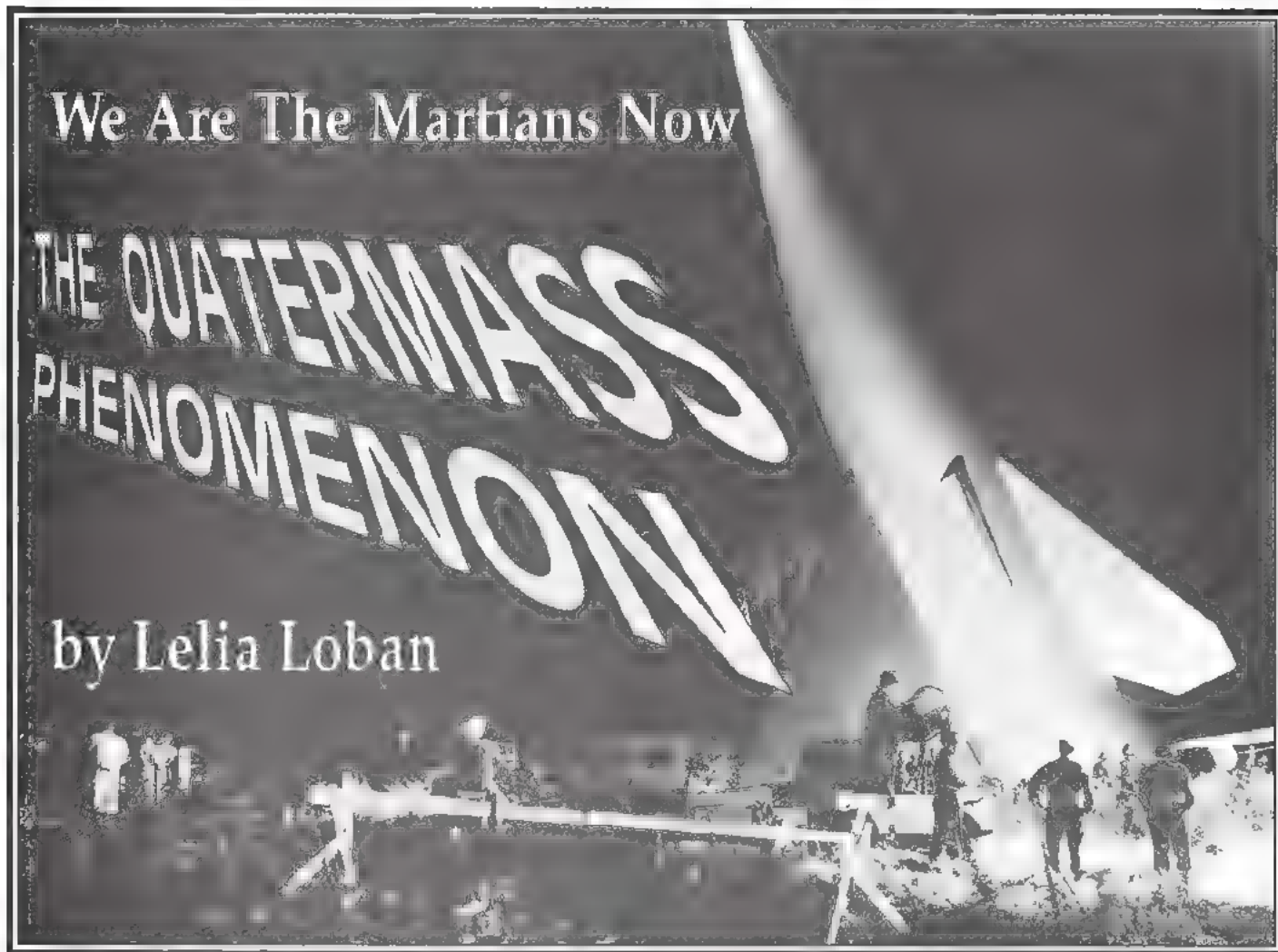
VG: We also shot in Fleet Street, and that was planned like a military operation. It had to be. To start with, we had to make it completely uninhabited. Fleet Street! We had to have boarded-up windows, dust, crap in

Continued on page 108

We Are The Martians Now

THE QUATERMASS PHENOMENON

by Lelia Loban



*Huffity, puffity, Ringstone Round,
If you lose your hat it will never be found,
So pull up your britches right up to your chin,
And fasten your cloak with a bright new pin,
And when you are ready, then we can begin,
Huffity, puffity, puff!*

—Children's rhyme from *Quatermass*

Like the children dancing in the ancient stone circle, ignorant of the lore behind their rhyme, we adults muddle along, never suspecting that our religious beliefs arise from dim memories of alien invasions . . . until the aliens come back. They hitch a ride home with our astronauts. They look out through the dull eyes of a bureaucrat behind his desk. Their spaceship, buried under the city, shapes us with psychic influence. They even control our children.

But never fear: They don't control Professor Bernard Quatermass!

The Professor's creator, British writer Nigel Kneale, won the Somerset Maugham Literary Prize with a short story in 1950 and has written more than three dozen scripts. His credits include the feature films *THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN* (1957), *FIRST MEN IN THE MOON* (1964), *THE WITCHES* (1966), and *HALLOWEEN III* (1983; he had his name removed from the credits) and such TV programs as *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* (1953), *THE CREATURE* (1955), *THE YEAR OF THE SEX OLYMPICS* (1968),

the six scripts for the ATV series *BEASTS* (1975), and *LADIES NIGHT* (1986).

As Julian Petley points out, "It is Kneale's ability to locate his strange stories in down-to-earth settings populated by credible characters that gives them their peculiar power to disturb." Kneale told Petley, "I like the blending of the ordinary and the extraordinary, the funny and the horrific." (*British Film Institute Monthly Film Bulletin*, March 1989.)

Several themes unite the Quatermass adventures. In each story, aliens invade the Earth to replace or enslave the human population. Invariably, the aliens are group creatures, whose minds form a gestalt. Taking advantage of bureaucratic secrecy and laziness to establish themselves, they subvert human free will into alien group-think. The resulting social disorder makes the Earth easy prey—until Quatermass intervenes.

"The aliens made us do it" becomes a reason—or an excuse—for antisocial behavior. Rationalizing the unspeakable leads people to sublimate racial memories of previous alien invasions, and transform them into occult and religious beliefs. As Tom Hutchinson puts it, "In each of the films, external abnormalities are made to coincide with what is wrong inside us. The result is a very unpleasant reflection of the way we live now." (*Horror and Fantasy in the Movies*, Crescent, 1974.) Once seen, the Quatermass adventures aren't easily forgotten.

In 1953, the BBC presented a black-and-white serial, *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT—A THRILLER FOR TELEVISION IN SIX PARTS* BY NIGEL KNEALE, starring Reginald Tate in a fine, understated performance as Quatermass. Rudolph Cartier produced and directed. Each weekly episode, nominally 30 minutes long, ran overtime.

The broadcast began with a warning that the program was "unsuitable for children or persons of a nervous disposition." (Only the first two episodes survive. Graininess and blurring obscure the actors' expressions, while noise on the deteriorated soundtrack adds a fingernails-on-the-blackboard quality to dialogue and music.)

The studio, Alexandra Palace, provided obsolete equipment, including fixed-lens cameras that showed images upside down and backwards in the viewfinder. On a miniscule budget, Kneale and director Cartier prefilmed a few cheesy special effects to cut in during the live transmission. Still, the landmark value and intrinsic quality of *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* shine through the primitive production.

Kneale explored a subject much in the news in 1953: anxiety over the looming space race. The USSR would launch the unmanned Sputnik 1 on October 4, 1957. Yuri Gagarin of the USSR would make the first manned flight aboard the Vostok 1 on April 12, 1961. Later, NASA instituted elaborate quarantine procedures because of fears that returning astronauts might contaminate the Earth with "space bugs."

In *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*, set in the immediate future, 60-something Professor Bernard Quatermass heads a British government-sponsored research project, The Experimental Rocket Group. His first manned rocket crashes near Wimbledon. Of the three astronauts, only Victor Carroon (Duncan Lamont) staggers out, semiconscious, abnormally cold, and unable to explain what happened even to his wife, cool-headed scientist Judith (Isabel Dean), who also works for Quatermass.

Bumbling government bureaucrats interfere with Quatermass' investigation, as do a pack of cynical newshounds led by James Fullalove (Paul Whitsun-Jones). At first a worthy adversary, Chief Inspector Lomax (Ian Colin) later becomes an intelligent ally for the Professor.

Quatermass deduces that an alien life form got into the spacecraft, absorbed two of the men (leaving their space suits behind), and inhabited Carroon. The alien brought along the remains of the other astronauts' personalities, who sometimes struggle to the surface. Carroon, in a parallel with the folkloric idea of demonic possession, now speaks German, a language he never knew.

This is all that remains of the original TV serial, unless the remaining episodes turn up, but stills and the published script indicate what follows:

Foiling Quatermass' attempt to control him, Carroon escapes and rampages through London. Soon, he's unrecognizable. Though Quatermass describes the alien as evil, it has no more personality than a cancer that digs in and grows; it's an equal-opportunity destroyer that snarfs up plants, animals, and people indiscriminately. By the time Quatermass and a crowd of reporters and government officials corner the Thing in Westminster Abbey, the gross mass is covered with sporangia, ready to reproduce by the millions. Nobody makes any sentimental noise about taking this Thing home and trying to understand it: They want only to kill it before it spreads.

For the final scenes in Westminster Abbey, Nigel Kneale plays the monster himself. "Stuck through holes in a blow-up of Poel's Corner were my two hands in rubber gloves liberally stuck over with vegetation... The fuzzy cameras helped and the audience's imagination did the rest."

Quatermass exhorts the human minds trapped in the alien to destroy the Thing from within, via psychokinetic suicide: "You will overcome this evil. Without you it cannot exist upon the earth... With all your power and mine joined to yours... you must sever from it... You... as men... must die!" The Thing heaves, twitches, and dies as the human spirit triumphs. (In print, this scene seems lame. Scripters talk a menace to death when they don't have an effects budget.)

Throughout *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*, limited technical resources force Kneale to tell instead of show. As the serial opens, the audience sees not the rocket crash, but a control room, where Quatermass and his assistants describe the event. The script reads better than it plays on TV, but the story drags, explaining everything for an audience new to sci-fi

In 1955, Hammer Films released *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* as a 78-minute, black-and-

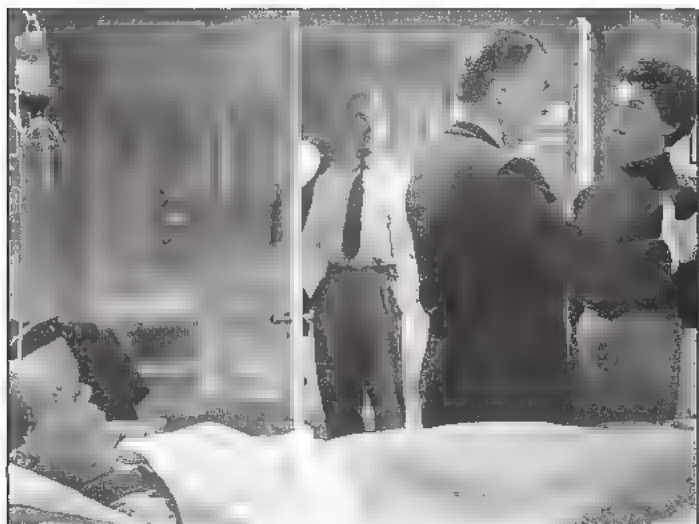
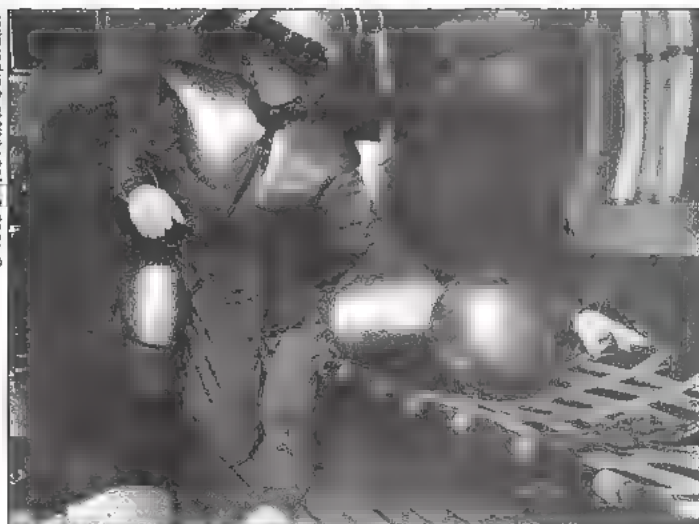
white feature film. Publicized as *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*, the better to draw crowds with the notion of X-Certificate (no children under 16 allowed) forbidden fruit, the film was released in the States as *THE CREEPING UNKNOWN* in 1956. Directed by Val Guest, it stars American actor Brian Donlevy as the Professor.

Despite a tight schedule and a low budget, Guest works in an established medium with far better resources than Kneale and Cartier commanded. Assuming the film audience has seen sci-fi before, Guest cuts to the action, opening with the rocket crash. Condensing more than three and a half hours of script to 78 minutes improves the pace of the story enormously, though Guest sacrifices some of Kneale's subtlety.

THE CREEPING UNKNOWN isn't perfect. For instance, the crashed space ship "is stuck in the ground



The Thing in Westminster Abbey was really Nigel Kneale's hands, in this scene from TV's *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*.



LEFT: Something gets into the space ship in Hammer's *THE CREEPING UNKNOWN* (1956). **RIGHT:** Hard-drinking star Brian Donlevy is either telling Margia Dean she can't act or trying to keep from sinking to the floor.

like a dart" (John Baxter, *Science Fiction in the Cinema*, A. S. Barnes & Co., 1970). However, some of those cheap effects are perspicacious. Writing in 1970, Baxter complains that the interior of the rocket ship "looks like an empty bus," but today's viewers may see a resemblance to the real-life Soyuz II.

Guest drastically reduces Judith Carroon's professional status, turning her into a sympathetic but vapid Little Wife. Maybe it's just as well; somehow actress Margia Dean lacks credibility as a rocket scientist. When Judith bemoans her husband's treatment, the Professor lectures and belittles her: "There's no room for personal feelings in science, Judith. Some of us have a mission. You should be very proud to have a husband who's willing to risk his life for the betterment of the whole world." In Kneale's serial, Carroon escapes on his own. In Guest's version, Judith foolishly spirits her husband out of quarantine, thus loosing him on London.

Richard Wordsworth, a gaunt Shakespearean character actor making his film debut, steals the show as the seizure-wracked Victor Carroon, unable to stop his metamorphosis. Compulsively, he grabs a cactus. He watches his hand absorb the plant, then swell into a disgusting cactus-shape. (You are what you eat.) With virtually no dialogue, Wordsworth is eerily effective at portraying the multiple personalities of the human victims the alien absorbs.

A vampire of sorts, the astronaut/alien drains the living of their vital juices along with their life force. The viewer sees exotic zoo animals, caged and helpless, pacing and howling as the Thing approaches. Next morning, their corpses lie strewn about. (This disturbing sequence, filmed at the Whipsnade Zoo, no doubt contributed to the film's X-Certificate.)

Near the docks at Deptford, Carroon meets a little girl (Jane Asher) who shows no fear. Rather than risk harming her, the man beneath the monster cringes and runs.

While Kneale's Quatermass is a problem solver, Guest makes him part of the problem: a gruff, self-righteous bully who alienates people in a position to help him. Many American viewers enjoy Donlevy's performance, but Nigel Kneale strongly objects to this abrasive, "bawling" interpretation.

Kneale's wounded ego aside, he has a point. Brian Donlevy was an alcoholic. Val Guest insists that Donlevy

never showed up too drunk to work. However, Guest told John Brosnan, "We used to feed him black coffee all morning, but then we discovered he was lacing it. But he was a very professional actor and very easy to work with." (*Future Tense: The Cinema of Science Fiction*. St. Martin's, 1978.) Perhaps it is Donlevy's drinking that makes Quatermass move woodenly and speak mechanically, the way someone might creep below the speed limit and never change lanes while driving home from a bar.

At the same time that he coarsens Quatermass, Guest makes police and government officials more intelligent and less buffoonish. Except for Minister Blake (an ass, in a delightful turn by Lionel Jeffries), the bureaucrats sometimes sound more reasonable than Quatermass.

Guest also cuts back on the comic relief, creating a dark, frightening atmosphere. However, character actress Thora Hird is both funny and touching as Rosemary Wrigley, a homeless drunk on the Embankment who reports seeing "something enormous." The police realize she's encountered Carroon. Relieved that she saw a real monster, not "a gin goblin," she forgets to take the coin she'd demanded as a bribe for talking.

With Quatermass' subordinates reduced to interchangeable young men, Inspector Lomax (Jack Warner) emerges as the voice of the common man. As the weirdness escalates, he resists: "I don't read science fiction. I'm a plain simple Bible man." Lomax questions the wisdom of sending men into space, and suggests that there are some things man was not meant to know.

In its final form, the Thing (made of tripe and rubber solution) looks like an octopus. Quatermass electrocutes it, using cables attached to the restoration scaffolding in Westminster Abbey. This climax, more credible than Kneale's, creates a tidy allegory: Religion (represented by Lomax and the Abbey) teams with science (electricity and Quatermass) to save humankind.

As the smoke settles, Lomax tells Quatermass, "This time you've won. In my simple Bible way, I've done a lot of praying. One world at a time is good enough for me."

Quatermass isn't convinced. When a subordinate asks him what he's going to do next, he says stubbornly, "I'm going to start again." The TV serial ends with the death of the Thing, but the film ends with another rocket—doubtless doomed—taking off.



1956 United Artists Corporation

LEFT: Christie (Harold Lang) is the first victim of *THE CREEPING UNKNOWN* (1956), but far from the last. **RIGHT:** A pharmacist (Toke Townley) stares in horror at the rapidly-transmogrifying Victor Carroon (Richard Wordsworth).

BBC-TV broadcast a new black-and-white Quatermass serial in October and November of 1955, with Rudolph Cartier again doubling as producer and director. (All six episodes survive; each runs over the allotted half-hour.) Because Reginald Tate died a few weeks before production began, John Robinson replaces him in the title role. Though he fluffs more lines than anyone else in the cast, Robinson is otherwise convincing and sympathetic as Quatermass.

Nineteen-fifty-five was "an unconfident time," Kneale observes in his preface to the published script. "There was much public concern about a new brand of bureaucracy, which manifested itself in the form of secret establishments . . . *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* had been the tale of a man-into-monster alone and pursued through London. This time the pattern would be reversed. Quatermass himself would be the lone figure, doggedly worrying his way through officialdom's barriers and pat explanations to get at a horrifying truth." According to Bruce Eder, "Kneale wrote *QUATERMASS II* in response to the Conservative government's secret construction of tracking stations and germ warfare laboratories." (*The Village Voice*, August 18, 1987.) Kneale also may have been influenced by George Orwell: In 1954, between the two Quatermass serials, he adapted 1984 for BBC-TV.

Working at Lime Grove TV, director Cartier had far better technical resources available this time, including a special-effects unit and cameras with movable lenses. Kneale got permission to shoot location footage (cut into the live broadcast) at the Shell Haven Refinery on the Thames estuary, in Essex. The British government War Office and the Territorial Army provided real radar equipment. The result is a far more convincing, polished production than the first serial.

Once again, the story takes place in the near future. Quatermass' daughter, Paula (shrill-voiced Monica Grey), a physicist, now works with him at The Rocket Group and dates Captain John Dillon (John Stone), one of the first victims of the invaders. As the serial opens, Quatermass' second manned rocket launch ends with a crash and explosion that kill the crew.

"Meteorites" falling nearby turn out to be miniature short-range space ships delivering an invasion force of aliens. If someone picks up a freshly fallen meteorite, it pops open, releasing a puff of ammonia gas and an

alien life form. A dark bubble on the victim's face quickly disappears, but leaves behind a telltale scar, similar to the folkloric "mark of the devil."

Quatermass discovers that the village of Winnerden Flats has been demolished to build a huge, secret installation that looks like a refinery. Fascistic, machine-gun-wielding guards gather up Dillon and the other victims and seclude them in the mysterious plant. (In the mid-1950s, the public feared automation meant dehumanization, resulting in this type of nightmare.)

When Quatermass investigates, the local police claim they have no jurisdiction over the facility. The Professor's usual sources in the military, Scotland Yard, and government ministries stonewall him. They claim the plant makes a synthetic food, kept secret to prevent industrial espionage. As his allies become infected, Quatermass realizes the huge scope of this conspiracy of silence. Groupthink takes over: the old village is torn down, replaced with an ugly, barrackslike housing development for the workers; a family at a picnic on a forbidden beach is murdered and carted off by the fascistic guards; normal human beings become alien controlled "zombies" when infected.

Quatermass takes an uninformative official tour of the plant, but sneaks off on his own. He sees a young publicist named Ward (Derek Aylward), who has also gone snooping, stagger slowly but doggedly down a long metal ladder from one of the "synthetic food" domes. The dome is full of slime, Ward gasps as he collapses, dying, to the ground. He slipped and got covered with the stuff. It isn't human food at all; it's a corrosive poison. Quatermass, who now knows too much, barely escapes in an effective chase scene through the sinister maze of pipes and machinery.

Quatermass and his team deduce that the mini-space-ships come from a satellite hidden in Earth orbit, in the Bieber Variation. The aliens are "A group creature . . . with one single consciousness . . . The experience of any one of them is transmitted to all the rest . . ." They implant "a new instinct. A blind compulsion to act only—for them." Aided by governments' natural penchant for secrecy, the aliens have built domes worldwide, to nourish themselves as they grow and adapt. Ultimately, they may terraform the earth into an alien colony with an atmosphere poisonous to humankind.



LEFT: QUATERMASS II hit British television in 1955, with John Robinson as Professor Quatermass and Hugh Griffith as his colleague, Leo Pugh. **RIGHT: Rupert Ward (Derek Aylward)** dies covered in alien "food."

However, the sluggish, alien-controlled "zombies" can't do the skilled labor required to build the domes. Quatermass mobilizes 30 of the tough union workers, armed and free. This bickering proletariat army storms the gate, overpowers the Nazi-like guards, and commandeers machine guns, a bazooka, and a control room.

Meanwhile, the zombies, in a crude attempt to co-opt the workers, play propaganda announcements and cheery tunes over the loudspeakers. (Tootling clarinets sound a bizarre counterpoint to the violence, resulting in a scene that's weird and wonderful even by today's standards.)

The workers sabotage the plant by feeding alien-poisoning oxygen into the domes; the aliens block the pipes with the corpses of some workers who foolishly agree to parlay. Enraged, the men fire guns, setting off explosions in the domes filled with flammable gasses.

With the plant in flames, Quatermass escapes, then goes after the mother ship that's launching the meteorites. He takes his fellow Rocket Group scientist, Dr. Leo Pugh, up with him in their faulty backup rocket. Leo, too, now fights the alien infection.

Welsh classical actor Hugh Griffith gives a splendid performance as the eccentric Pugh, a "human computer."

Setting a rocket's course with mental math because there's "no time" to use a machine sounds ludicrous today. However, in 1955, a room-sized computer packed less power than a modern pocket computer, and had to be reprogrammed with punch cards for every calculation.

The climactic scenes aboard the rocket between Pugh and Quatermass suffer from poor special effects and slow-moving exposition. (Pugh shouldn't need to be told to keep his magnetic boots on the deck so as not to float!) However, the struggle between the men, as Pugh fights for control against the growing alien influence, brings the serial to a satisfying end

In 1957, Hammer Films adapted the second TV serial as an 84-minute, black-and-white feature film, *QUATERMASS II*, known in the States as *ENEMY FROM SPACE*. As before, Val Guest directs and Brian Donlevy stars as Quatermass.

Kneale's script for the *QUATERMASS II* serial is far tighter than his original script for *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*, with fewer talking-head scenes. It's harder to shorten. Kneale drafted a script for *ENEMY FROM SPACE*, but Guest revised it, finding it too ver-

LEFT: Professor Quatermass (Andre Morell), Colonel Breen (Anthony Bushell), and the Sergeant (Michael Ripper) confront man's fears in television's *QUATERMASS AND THE PIT* (1958). **RIGHT: Hoppity goes to town!**



bose. Guest's film is a thriller, exciting but less political and complex than the original.

Too often, coincidence drives the plot, as when the film opens with Quatermass encountering a meteorite victim by chance on the roadway. However, the worst problem with *ENEMY FROM SPACE* is the shortage of sympathetic characters. Donlevy's abusive Quatermass shouts at his subordinates and threatens them with unemployment if they don't jump fast enough. He's the boss from hell. The Professor, looking for trouble, confronts the rational Inspector Lomax (John Longdon) belligerently. Lomax protests, "Now, look, sir, it's your habit to ride roughshod over . . ." Quatermass proves the point by riding roughshod over the rest of Lomax's sentence.

Guest eliminates Leo Pugh and Quatermass' daughter altogether. Again, one has trouble telling Quatermass' young assistants apart. The courageous factory workers (among them Hammer's ubiquitous Michael Ripper) become a disaffected band of union stiffies who never really unite. Drunk, they storm the plant, not to save humanity, but because zombies take a cute blonde (Vera Day) who picks up a meteor and gets zombified.

With its higher budget, the film takes advantage of a better special effects unit than that used for the serial. Like the BBC, Hammer also got permission to film at the Shell Haven refinery. Guest makes fine use of the special properties of black-and-white film to emphasize light and sinister shadows in the factory. The scene in which the slime-covered man staggers down the ladder from one of the domes is one of the strongest in the film. (This time the victim, played by Tom Chatto, is the forthright MP, Broadhead, an educated working-class man outraged over spiraling cost overruns at the plant.)

At the film's conclusion, Quatermass and his allies watch from the ground as the rocket blows up the artificial asteroid in the sky. (Wait a minute: Wasn't that satellite hiding in the Bieber Variation? Then why can we see the explosion from Earth?)

Overall, *ENEMY FROM SPACE* is fast paced and entertaining, but less disturbing than the TV serial.

BBC-TV continued the Quatermass story from December 1958 through January 1959 with another serial: *QUATERMASS AND THE PIT*. All six episodes survive.

The serial, broadcast live with prerecorded scenes cut in, is a well-paced, absorbing drama. Since Quatermass was a big hit by this time, BBC-TV provided a higher (though not lavish) budget, allowing producer/director Rudolph Cartier to make *QUATERMASS AND THE PIT* look reasonably convincing. The enormous cast includes many fine character actors in small roles.

The serial opens with a close shot of two street signs on the wall of a London building. The white, modern sign reads "HOBBS LANE, SW1." The old, metal plate reads "HOB'S LANE." (Hob is an archaic nickname for the Devil.) Workmen excavating a deep site for a new office building on this haunted ground discover bones.

"It was 1959, when a lot of reconstruction was going on, the final rebuilding of the blitzed areas," writes Nigel Kneale in his introduction to the published script. The prefilmed scenes in the pit look like location shots, but Kneale says, "tons of mud were spilled into the BBC's newly acquired studios at Ealing. The designer, Clifford Hatts, made [the excavation] appear to get dug deeper and deeper by the simple device of raising its sides . . ."

Dr. Roney (Cec Linder), a noted paleontologist, claims that the bones belonged to a five-million-year-old ape man.

Roney's assistant, Barbara Judd (Christine Finn), is decidedly ahead of her time compared to most women in 50s sci-fi. Attractive without looking fussy, she doesn't hesitate to pick up a dead sparrow she finds at the dig. It interests her; it bothers her no more than a fossil would.

Meanwhile, military minds saddle Quatermass (now played by Andre Morell) with an assistant controller, Colonel Breen (Anthony Bushell). To Quatermass' disgust, instead of using his rockets for peaceful scientific inquiry, the military establishment plans to use them in "Operation Damocles Sword," a dead man's deterrent scheme. As Quatermass tells his friend Roney, "You've got one thing to be thankful for. There's no military value in fossil apes." (Andre Morell is a rather mannered actor with a plummy voice. Though more sympathetic than Donlevy, his Quatermass is a cool, snooty aristocrat who speaks condescendingly, though gently when questioning frightened people.)

Shortly after Roney starts his dig, workers uncover what they fear is an unexploded World War II bomb, though the hull seems to be ceramic, not metal. Bomb disposal expert Captain Potter (John Stratton) speculates that the "bomb" might be a Satan. He's literally right: It's the origin of mankind's beliefs about the Devil. Roney and Quatermass suspect the device must really be an alien spacecraft when diggers find ape-man remains in undisturbed strata above the missile, but Colonel Breen and the government disagree. Breen believes the rocket is an old German propaganda trick, seeded with fake fossils to panic the British.

Even a (fictional) "borazon" drill, several times harder than diamond, can't penetrate the missile, but it does set off a reaction: a horrible buzzing and vibration. The drill operator, Sladden (Richard Shaw), goes into shock when he sees an apparition of "a hideous dwarf." Polter-





It looks harmless enough, but that "meteor" is really an **ENEMY FROM SPACE** (1957).

geist apporls fly about the site, which grows deadly cold, a traditional sign of disturbed spirits.

A hole mysteriously appears in a hatch, which Quatermass opens. Inside lie the dead aliens who brought the ship to Earth. They look like four-foot locusts. Preserved in the sealed hull, the bodies decompose as the outside air hits them, but Roney and his assistant gleefully retrieve specimens for autopsy.

Quatermass concludes that the ship's hull has lifelike properties; it sends psychic messages. ("Surely it's possible for ghosts . . . to be phenomena that were badly observed and wrongly interpreted.") He and Miss Judd discover that Hobbs Lane has a reputation for being haunted, with manifestations appearing every time the ground is disturbed. Analyzing hallucinations produced by the ship, Quatermass deduces that many alien spacecraft came to Earth. Aliens captured the apelike ancestors of man in the Pliocene Era, took them to Mars, genetically altered them, and then planted them back on Earth—as breeding stock for cannon fodder in the genocidal war between rival Martian races.

The Martians destroyed their environment and killed each other off before the plan came to fruition. (Cartier leads up to this revelation with subliminal preparation. In

Broadhead (Tom Chatto) becomes a hot breakfast treat when he falls in a vat of alien food.



40 **SCARLET STREET**

the background of many scenes are heard radio and television broadcasts describing race riots, wars, and other human reversion to savagery.)

Now, mass panic begins as psychic disturbances and poltergeist phenomena radiate from the fully-exposed space ship. Sladden, who seemed to have recovered, takes off in a shambling, ape-like run. When he falls to the ground, the earth ripples beneath him. He seeks sanctuary in a church, whose vicar (Noel Howlett) believes Sladden has been in contact with "spiritual evil."

Quatermass agrees, saying of Sladden's hallucinations, "I believe that what he has just told us was a vision of Mars five million years ago."

"We are the Martians now," says reporter James Fullove (Brian Worth).

At a press conference in the pit, set up by the government to prove there's nothing wrong, the hull sucks up energy from electric wires, TV cameras, and microphones, setting off an eruption of phenomena. Electrical cables whip about like snakes. Colonel Breen turns to stone. Finally, the hull transforms itself into a flaming apparition of the horned devil—actually the silhouette of an insect Martian—which fills the dark sky.

Londoners run berserk, reenacting the Wild Hunt, the hellride of witches from ancient folklore, a memory of the Martian racial purges. With London in flames, even the reliable Barbara Judd goes mad. Quatermass, fighting an irrational impulse to murder Roney, realizes that the aliens have programmed humans to kill those who are "different," who have not inherited the alien genetic codes. (In his introduction to the published script, Kneale wrote, "... whereas the first serial dealt with a contact in real time and the second one with an invasion already established for a year, this . . . intrusion would have come five million years in the past, when no resistance was possible, so that it succeeded wholly and built certain undesirable characteristics into Earth's future population. Quatermass would be fighting his own heredity.")

One of the few with immunity, Dr. Roney reasons that the Devil's traditional enemies were iron and water. "If it was possible to fling a mass of steel cable through the middle of [the fireball]—connected to wet earth—that might make sense, both magical and scientific!"

He grounds a roll of steel chain by connecting it to a sewer pipe, then hurls the chain into the fireball. Struck down as if by lightning, he gives his life to save others.

The manifestations subside. Quatermass addresses the viewer directly: "Every war crisis, witch hunt, race riot, and purge is a warning. We are the Martians. If we cannot control the inheritance within us, this will be their second dead planet."

In 1967, Hammer Films released a 98-minute, color film of **QUATERMASS AND THE PIT**, directed by Roy Ward Baker. In 1968, it hit the USA as **FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH**. Kneale's script tracks closely with the TV serial. However, in the film, the archaeological dig takes place in an old tube station, under construction as London Transport enlarges the Underground—a perfect, spooky setting for a horror story.

Hammer provides a splendid cast, right down to the bit players. For instance, when Dr. Roney exhibits Barbara Judd's model of the Pliocene ape, note the female reporter who, with some help from Michael Morris' makeup, looks exactly like the model.

Scotsman Andrew Keir gives a fine account of Quatermass, retaining some of Donlevy's no-nonsense gruff-

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FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH (starring Barbara Shelley, pictured below with Bryan Marshall), was the last theatrical version of a Quatermass TV serial. **RIGHT:** Professor Quatermass and Dr. Roney (Andrew Keir and James Donald) contemplate a Martian. **CENTER:** Sladden (Duncan Lamont) has seen the Martian past, and it is us. **FAR RIGHT:** Andrew Keir and Barbara Shelley do the Martian Boogie Woogie.

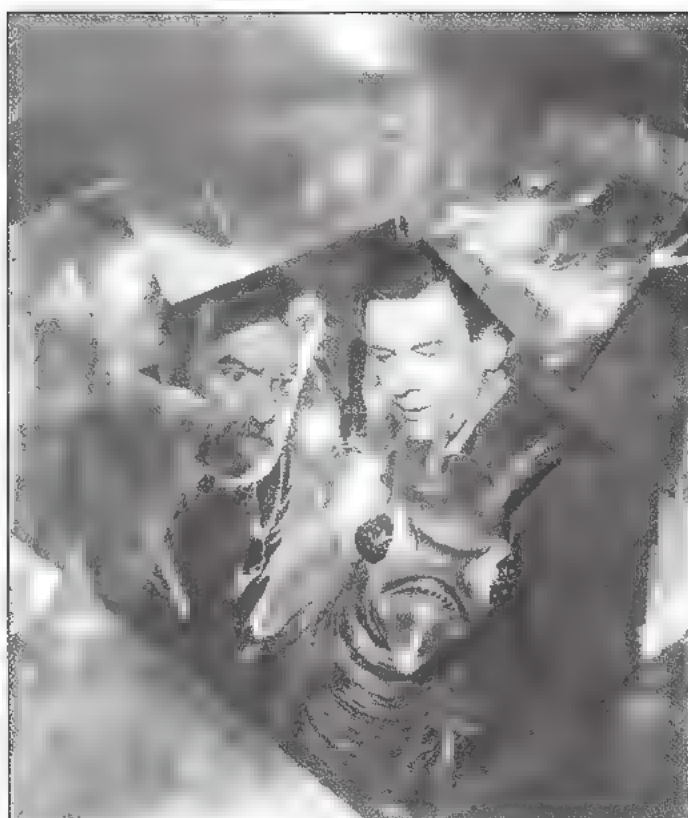
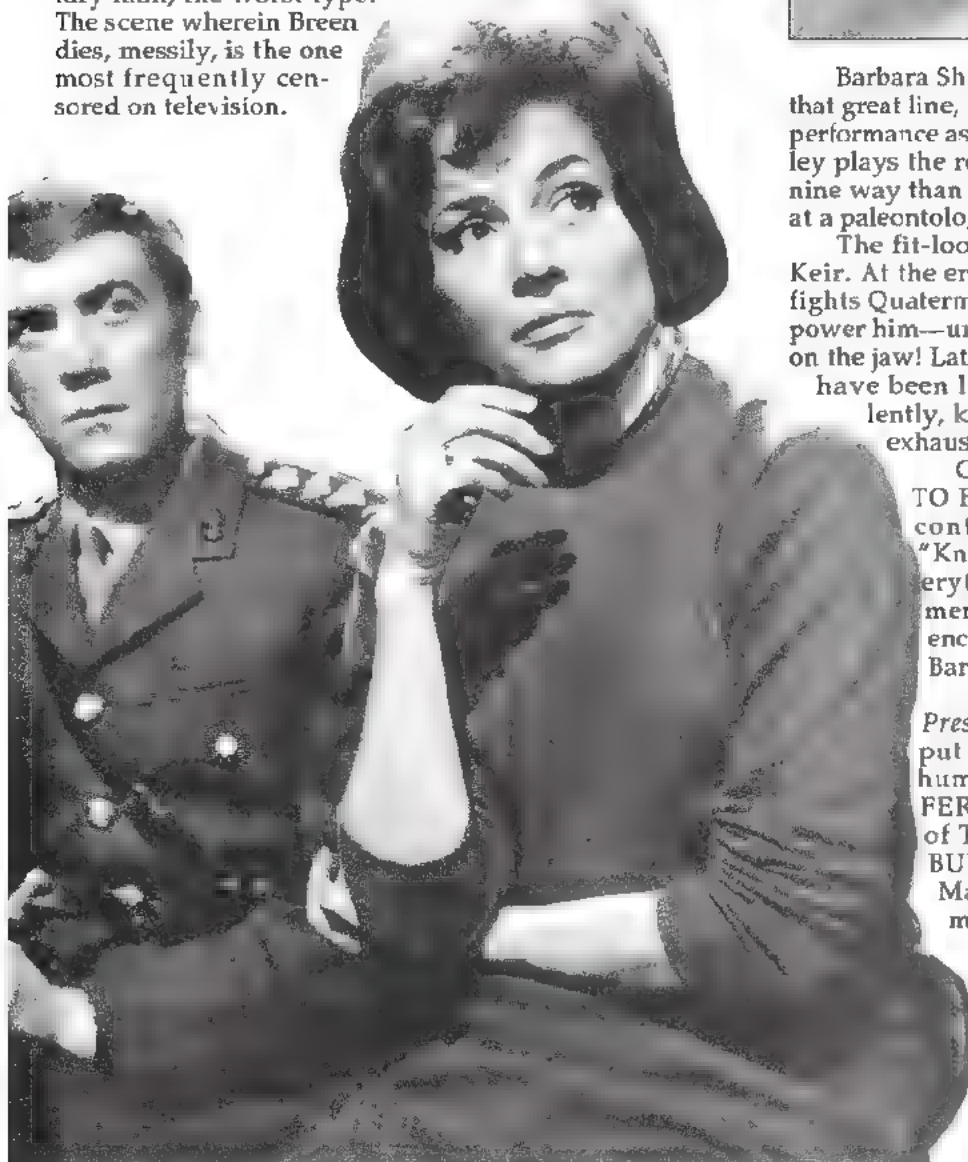
ness while showing a humane, gentle side just under the surface. He's tough without being mean and sympathetic without being goopy.

In **FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH**, however, Quatermass doesn't get top billing. It goes to James Donald as Dr. Matthew Roney.

Donald gets to shine in a climax that is an improvement on the serial: Instead of throwing a roll of chain as "cold iron," he climbs a huge steel crane, crawls out to the end of the arm, and uses his weight to jockey it into motion, swinging it and himself into the insect face of the fireball in a spectacular hero's death scene.

Julian Glover, with one of the best sneers in the business, plays a Colonel Breen who's stupider, more cowardly, and more entertaining than Anthony Bushell in the serial. However, Kneale softens the anti-military tone of the original script by dropping Quatermass's description of Breen as "a career military man, the worst type."

The scene wherein Breen dies, messily, is the one most frequently censored on television.



© Warner Bros. Television

Barbara Shelley, well known to *Scarlet Streeters*, gets that great line, "We are the Martians now," in a winning performance as Barbara Judd. Credible as a scientist, Shelley plays the role in a softer, more conventionally feminine way than Finn. She looks overdressed, showing up at a paleontological dig in a pink suit, but she's no wimp.

The fit-looking actress is nearly as tall as Andrew Keir. At the end of the film, when Judd goes mad and fights Quatermass, she looks as if she might well overpower him—until he doubles his fist and clocks her, right on the jaw! Later, recovering their wits after the "ghosts" have been laid, these survivors eye each other silently, keeping their distance with expressions of exhaustion mixed with wary respect.

Critical reaction to **FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH** ranges from high praise to utter contempt. John Baxter calls the picture "Kneale's finest idea, the culmination of everything in the other serials, a powerful statement of the evil and good that can lie in science . . ." (*Science Fiction in the Cinema*, A. S. Barnes & Co., 1970.)

Roger Greenspun in the *New York Free Press* (June 13, 1968) goes further: "I should put **FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH** in humble but real relation to Murnau's **NOSFERATU** and in the happy British traditions of **THE TIME MACHINE** and **BURN WITCH BURN**. As for its findings about the Dawn of Man and the course of human evolution, it makes 2001 look like [a] nursery story. . . ."

Vincent Canby of *The New York Times* (May 30, 1968) had almost the opposite reaction: "Unfortunately, all of [the film's] pseudo-scientific talk seems to short-circuit the audience's interest—in it and in themselves. I crept out quietly while



the others were sleeping." (Viewers slept through FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH? Really? All right, if he says so, but it's probably safe to assume that no Scarlet Streeters sat in that crowd.)

After many years of delay, the final installment of the Quatermass saga appeared as THE QUATERMASS CONCLUSION (aka QUATERMASS), a four-part TV serial from Thames TV and Euston Films, made in 1978 but not shown until 1979. Piers Haggard directs from a Nigel Kneale screenplay. The script has not been published, but in 1979, Arrow Books brought out Kneale's novel of the story, *Quatermass*. Not up to his best standards, it's written in a mannered, machine-gun style that relies on sentence fragments for drama.

With TV no longer in its infancy, Thames EMI mounts a slick, color production. The New Age synthesizer music by Marc Wilkinson and Nic Rowley sounds low-budget, but the special effects are convincing. The production features actors who look like people, not starlets, with skilled character players in the minor roles.

By far the grimmest of the four stories, this view of the near future as a dystopia already seemed dated by the time it came out. In the shorter, video version, before the opening credits, the viewer sees scenes of urban blight. Cars resemble the half-wrecked, armored vehicles in ROAD WARRIOR. A Russian-accented Narrator (Brewster Mason) says, "In that last quarter of the 20th century, the whole world seemed to sicken. Civilized institutions, whether old or new, fell, as if some primal disorder was reasserting itself."

Quatermass (John Mills) comes on this scene and promptly gets mugged. Joe Kapp (Simon MacCorkindale) rescues him. Kapp is a fellow guest on a live broadcast of a joint USA / USSR spacelab project. Quatermass, drawn out of a lonely retirement for the broadcast, looks too young for someone whose daughter, an adult in QUA-



TERMASS II, has given him a grandchild, Hettie (the otherworldly Rebecca Saire), now in her teens.

She's missing, the real reason the sweet but crusty Quatermass has agreed to appear on TV. He waves the girl's picture and appeals to viewers to call if they've seen her. Instead of delivering the expected praise, the Professor says he's ashamed to have had anything to do with the space program. To everyone's horror, the spacelab promptly blows up, as if to prove his point.

Kapp rescues Quatermass again, taking him past the gangs, into the country, to one of the few astronomic observatories still functioning. Meanwhile, the world's young people, including Hettie, congregate in a vacant eyed, hippie-type cult called the Planet People. They believe that, if they gather at certain sites (usually prehistoric stone circles), they'll be magically transported to a new, fresh planet of peace and love.

To the scientists' shock, something does happen at 5,000-year-old Ringstone Round (which is similar to Stonehenge). A wide beam of white light bolts down from the sky and, in a flash, the kids in the circle vanish. Only white crystals, ash, and a few small personal effects remain. Similar events happen at other sites. A great mob of kids goes up in a blaze of glory at Wembley Stadium, "The sacred turf, they call it," Quatermass points out.

Curiously, nobody speculates aloud that the Planet People might think they're getting Raptured. Fundamentalists Christians believe that God will Rapture the faithful, taking them directly to heaven, just before He destroys the Earth with fire. Perhaps this concept seemed too controversial for TV, but in the novel, Kneale implies (without ever spelling it out) that, just as the ghosts in QUATERMASS AND THE PIT were "phenomena that were badly observed and wrongly interpreted," the Rapture is a racial memory of alien abduction.

Quatermass and his no-nonsense sidekick, District Commissioner Annie Morgan (Margaret Tyzack), brave

the Pay Cops and the gangs to find medical care for a girl named Isabel, sole survivor of the Ringstone Round holocaust. Isabel's body levitates from the hospital bed. In the novel, "the thought shot through Annie Morgan's mind that something wonderful was about to occur, a miraculous transubstantiation. Images of praying saints caught at her." It's all a cruel cheat, however, because in the next instant, in both novel and program, the girl explodes, raining a nauseating mist over everyone in the room.

Working exclusively with elderly scientists who are unaffected by the attraction that lures the Planet People, Quatermass discovers that aliens are harvesting human young for some unknown, possibly trivial purpose, much as humans unthinkingly sacrifice small animals for research. An alien device buried in the ground lures the young to the chosen targets. The beam of light comes from an alien machine.

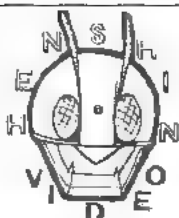
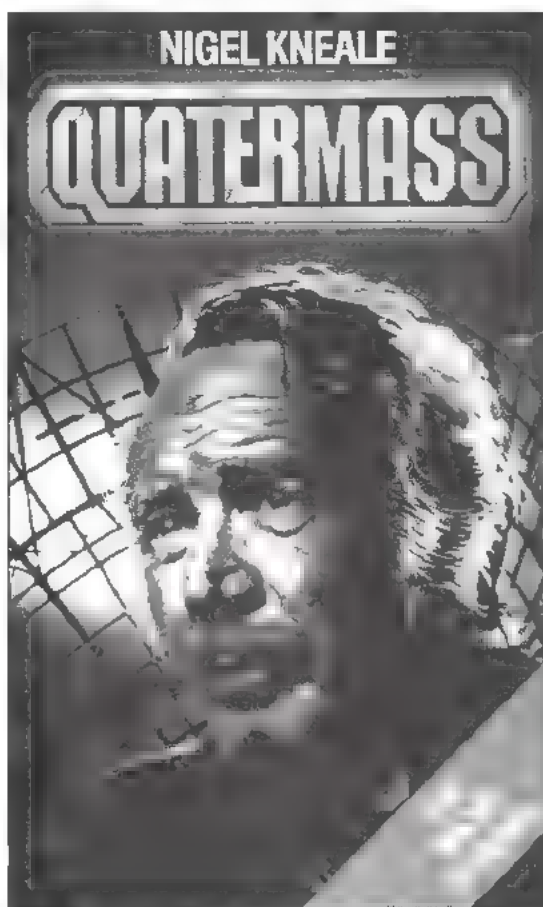
Quatermass concludes that the only way to stop the destruction is to set a trap, luring the machine to a stone circle with the recorded voices and chemically-produced smells of about a million kids. The poison bait in the

trap is a 35-kiloton nuclear bomb, "to sting it, send a shock back across the galaxy." (Why this deterrent should work on such an advanced species is unclear.) Quatermass decides to set off the bomb by hand, from Ground Zero, at precisely the right moment. The bomb looks very impressive, with a great big red button to push.

At the last minute, real Planet People, including Quatermass' granddaughter, show up. She joins him, places her hand over his and helps him set off the nuke. The film ends in maudlin fashion, with the Narrator intoning, "The message was taken. It has not come again." The viewer sees a beautiful, clean countryside, with children playing in peace and singing the "Huffity, puffity, Ringstone Round" rhyme.

In the novel, the blast leaves a crater 190 meters deep. This is an unsatisfactory end to a fascinating character. One is left with the impression that nobody has yet done full justice to Professor Quatermass. Tough luck: according to Nigel Kneale, we've seen the last of Professor Bernard Quatermass. "He's good and dead."

So was Sherlock Holmes.



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CARDS- GODZILLA/TOHO, MEXICAN WRESTLING/HORROR

GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA (1993) (C)
GODZILLA VS. MOTHRA (1992) (ES)
GODZILLA VS. KING GHIDORAH (1991) (ES)
GODZILLA (1954) (ES)
DESTROY ALL MONSTERS (E)
ATRAKON (E)
LATITUDE ZERO (E)
KING KONG ESCAPES (E)
VARAN (E) (J UNCUT)
EVIL OF DRACULA (E)
LAKE OF DRACULA (E)
SECRET OF THE TELEGIAN (E-COLOR)
GAMERA VS. MONSTER X (E)
VOYAGE INTO SPACE (E)
THE SKULL SOLDIER (J) (X)
LADY BATTLE COP (J)
FUTURE NINJA (J)
DIEHARD ANGELS (J) (X)
KAMEN RIDER: VOL. 1-25 (J)
KAMEN RIDER V3: VOL. 1-13 (J)
KAMEN RIDER X: VOL. 1-2 (J)
TRUE KAMEN RIDER (J)
KAMEN RIDER ZO (1993) (J)
KIKAIKID: VOL. 1-3 (ES)
ULTRAMAN: VOL. 1-10 (E)
SPACE GIANTS: VOL. 1 (E)

JAPANESE SUPER SENTAI (Power Rangers)

GO RANGER (1975) (J)
BATTLE FEVER J (1979) (ES)
DYNAMAN: VOL. 1 (1983) (J)
JETMAN: VOL. 1-9 (1991) (J)
JYU RANGER: VOL. 1-9 (1992) (J)
DAI RANGER: VOL. 1-9 (1993) (J)
KAKU RANGER: VOL. 1-3 (1994) (J)



MICHAEL RIPPER

Hammer's Man of Many Parts interviewed by Bruce G. Hallenbeck

If you're reading this magazine (and you are), the chances are better than average that, at some time in your life, you've seen a Hammer Film. And, if you've seen a Hammer Film, the chances are excellent that you've seen Michael Ripper.

One of the charms of going to see Hammer horror movies in the 50s, 60s, and early 70s was that it was like going to see your favorite stock company. Directors, technicians, and especially actors were showcased in film after film. Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee got all the glitzy starring roles, but the supporting players helped ground the film in reality, and added a certain cozy familiarity that made you feel as though you were visiting old friends.

It was fun to play "Spot the Actor"—there was George Woodbridge, the innkeeper in *HORROR OF DRACULA* (1958), returning as the sadistic janitor who bashed in Michael Gwynn's skull in *REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1958); there was Barry Warren, a bloodsucker in *KISS OF THE VAMPIRE* (1963), getting stabbed to death by a vengeful Susan Denberg in *FRANKENSTEIN CREATED WOMAN* (1967); there was Duncan Lamont, the police chief in *EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1964), as the terrified Sladen, victim of alien possession in *FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH* (1968).

Hammer's most prolific character actor, by far, was Michael Ripper. The gruff voiced, classically-trained actor was most often seen in military roles (1956's *X THE*



LEFT: Michael Ripper, Christopher Lee, and Kerwin Mathews ship ahoy in *THE PIRATES OF BLOOD RIVER* (1962). **RIGHT:** Ray Barrett and Michael Ripper are scared out of their skins in *THE REPTILE* (1966).

UNKNOWN and the BBC-TV production of *QUATER MASS AND THE PIT*), as a town drunk (1959's *THE MUMMY*), as a policeman (1970's *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA*), or as an innkeeper (1971's *SCARS OF DRACULA*). However, he also played a Japanese soldier in Val Guest's *CAMP ON BLOOD ISLAND* (1958), an Arab in *CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB* (1964), and a Spaniard in *DEVIL-SHIP PIRATES* (1964). The versatile actor worked with such directors as Terence Fisher, Joseph Losey, Freddie Francis, and John Gilling. In fact, his association with Hammer goes all the way back to Losey's short film *MAN ON THE BEACH* (1955), written by Jimmy Sangster, in which Ripper played a chauffeur.

I first met Michael Ripper in London in 1980. He was kind enough to invite me to his flat, where he proudly showed me a scrapbook that included photos of him in a number of roles outside the Hammer canon—including a stage performance as Hamlet. In person, Ripper was very much like the kindly Tom Bailey, his role in Gilling's *THE REPTILE* (1966).

Recently, I caught up with Michael Ripper, now in his 80s, and talked with him about his career, his health, and his life in general.

During my visit with him in 1980, we'd had a few pints of ale. "I can't drink now!" Ripper told me in our recent conversation. "Isn't that awful? I take pills to keep me from dyin', and you mustn't take alcohol when you take these." Of course, we're all used to seeing Ripper either behind or in front of bars in the various Hammer roles that he played. It just doesn't seem right that he can't have a pint of bitters now and then. Then again, as he reminded me, it was a health problem that led to that famous gruff voice of his.

"I gave up smoking in 1952," he recalled. "I'd been told by the medical men that that's got nothing to do with it, but I think it may have, because if you're smoking a lot—and I used to buy 50 a day—it's very soothing. When that was cut off, my thyroid went absolutely mad.

I went down to seven stone and six (104 pounds—Ed.), which is not very nice. I was very lucky, because a drug had just come out to control the output of the thyroid. When I was told to take that, the ordinary doctors didn't know anything about it. I was sent to Harley Street, which is the big medical place here, to be dosed. I was lucky again, but they couldn't get it under proper control; I had to have an operation. When I came out of the operation, I could only talk in a whisper. It got a little better, of course, but it never went back to my theater voice at all. Even nowadays, I couldn't do the theater. I was quite good in the theater; I played Hamlet once."

Indeed, by the time he'd had the operation that ruined his "theater voice," Ripper had already been an actor for decades. Born in 1913 in Portsmouth, on the south coast of Britain, Ripper came from "a very normal sort of middle-class family." But he recalls that he was always interested in acting.

"I could afford to go to the theater a couple of times a week," he related, "and sit in the cheaper seats. So I was always interested. I was also very good at reciting poetry. I had, in those days, a very good voice. I won a prize for the adults when I was 13, I think it was . . . I hated school. When I was 14, I didn't feel very well—I forget what the symptoms were—and my father told me to go to the doctor. So I did, and he asked me all sorts of questions. He said, 'Well, how do you get on in school?' And I told him how I got on at school. Then he made the extraordinary, unbelievable remark, 'If you feel like that about it, then you'd better not go back!' I mean, I had two solid years of school ahead of me and the exam that would send you to university and all that. That was how it started, and I went to drama school at 15. Then I went straight into rep. So I was an actor at 16."

Ripper actually has been on screen since the 1930s, beginning his film career in what used to be called "quota quickies." These were British B-movies made as supporting features. "We made one about every six weeks," Ripper remembered. "We'd shoot 5,000 feet for £5,000. A pound a foot. They weren't very good, but there were good bits and pieces in 'em. Then I was asked

Bruce G. Hallenbeck has contributed to Cinefantastique, Little Shoppe of Horrors, and Fangoria.



LEFT: Michael Ripper interrogates Barbara Shelley in *CAMP ON BLOOD ISLAND* (1958). RIGHT: Ripper (pictured with Maggie Kimberley and John Phillips) had one of his best roles in *THE MUMMY'S SHROUD* (1967).

by somebody who had been in a theater that I'd worked in at Cambridge—they had a very, very good rep there; I played some lovely parts—if I'd like to go to Dublin, because he was the producer at the Gate Theatre there. And I went, and it was there, actually, that I played Hamlet. So that was a good outing, that one."

In 1948, Ripper appeared in the David Lean production of *OLIVER TWIST*. He recalled the experience as "very good. He [Lean] was very nice to me. I liked him; I thought he was great."

Nevertheless, Ripper still harbors his fondest memories for Hammer. "The most enjoyable time of my life was when Tony Hinds was running Hammer. Great!"

Ripper's first film for Hammer was Joseph Losey's *MAN ON THE BEACH* (1955). Ripper related, "There were four chaps running the company, two adults and two young fellows. When I say young, I think the youngest was Mike Carreras, who in those days was perhaps 18, or something like that. Maybe 20; I don't know. Tony Hinds was Will Hinds' son. Will Hinds was mad on the theater. He had a friend who was also balmy about it. They used to do a double act; they called themselves Hammer and Smith. There's a part of London called Hammersmith, you see. That's how it [the company] came to be called Hammer. When Will Hinds died, Tony took over his father's share of the business. My first work for Jim Carreras was that short film."

Ripper was also in three of the best British sci-fi films and/or TV series of the 1950s: the film *QUATERMASS 2* (U. S. title: *ENEMY FROM SPACE*), *X THE UNKNOWN* and the BBC TV serial *QUATERMASS AND THE PIT*. In the latter, broadcast live on television in 1957, Ripper again played an army sergeant. Even outside the Hammer oeuvre, he seemed to be typecast.

QUATERMASS 2 was directed by Val Guest, whom Ripper remembered "did some very good things. The director that I got on with extremely well was John Gilling. He was very good—and he thought a lot of me, I know that. He was very good as far as I was concerned, because I'm one of those actors who 'dies soon.' By that I mean, give me a few rehearsals and get to take three. Af-

ter that I was dead, you know? If he saw me dying, he'd lean forward and say, 'Oh, Michael, when such and such a thing happens, say something like . . . '—which inspired me, you see, got me working again."

Although Ripper seemed surprised when I told him that his horror films are still very popular in the States ("Really? Well, I'll be blown! I wish they'd send me some money!"), he did recall his favorite Hammer role: "It was *THE MUMMY'S SHROUD*, where the Mummy dropped me out of the window. That was one of the few times where I got to create a truly sympathetic character. That was directed by John Gilling again . . . I got good notices for that here; they said that it didn't usually happen that pathos was brought into a horror film."

Other Hammer roles in which Ripper shone include *NIGHT CREATURES* (1962), the pirate thriller based in large part on the 1937 British film *DR. SYN* (and remade by Disney, also in 1962, as *DR. SYN, ALIAS THE SCARECROW*), in which he played Nipps, the right-hand man to Peter Cushing's Captain Clegg; and *DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE* (1968), one of the most popular of the studio's vampire films, in which he portrayed one of his most irascible but lovable innkeepers.

In *THE PIRATES OF BLOOD RIVER* (1962), Ripper played one of pirate Christopher Lee's henchmen. "Chris Lee played the pirate," Ripper said, "and we were going across a river. We both had two stunt men on either side of us. Suddenly Chris turned to me and said, 'I'm out of my depth!'"

Ripper also recalled performing with a very young Oliver Reed in *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* (1961). One of the most striking scenes that he ever played for Hammer was the one in which, as the town drunk, he finds himself locked in a jail cell with Reed, who is gradually (and horrifically) turning into a werewolf. I asked him if it was a difficult scene to film.

"No," he replied. "As far as I was concerned, it was easy because of Ollie. In those days he was young and he wasn't on the bottle the way he got later on. When he was changing into the wolf in that cell scene, he was tremendous! Oh, by golly, the whole studio shook!"



THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF (1961) showcased Michael Ripper as the drunk who fatally finds himself penned up with the village lycanthrope (Oliver Reed) during the night of the full moon.

Ripper also has fond memories of Jacqueline Pearce, with whom he worked in both **PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES** and **THE REPTILE**: "She was fine to work with . . . very good." But his fondest recollections of all are reserved for Tony Hinds.

"The whole system worked magnificently when Tony was in charge," he related. "But they didn't appreciate him! Do you know why he left? What happened was that Tony had made all these films for the company and had written many of the scripts [under the pseudonym John Elder]. Jim Carreras went to America to rustle up money for the next film, and when he came back, he told Tony that he would be assistant producer to this lady, Joan Harrison, who was coming in to be the producer. Tony finished the film—but he left, went."

Actually, what Ripper is referring to is the television series **JOURNEY INTO THE UNKNOWN** (1968-69), which Hammer made for ABC-TV. Harrison had been assistant to Alfred Hitchcock on his television show, and the network insisted that she produce the series with Hinds in an "assistant" capacity. The series was short-lived, but it left Hinds with a bitter taste in his mouth and he soon left the company—which was never quite the same again, according to Ripper.

"Well, he made it, didn't he? He was it, really," Ripper lamented. The actor doesn't recall a particular falling out with Hammer: "I don't think they ever asked me to leave. I can't honestly remember why or what happened to me. But they knew that I was a good friend of Tony's. Indeed, it may be that I just said, 'Stuff it!'"

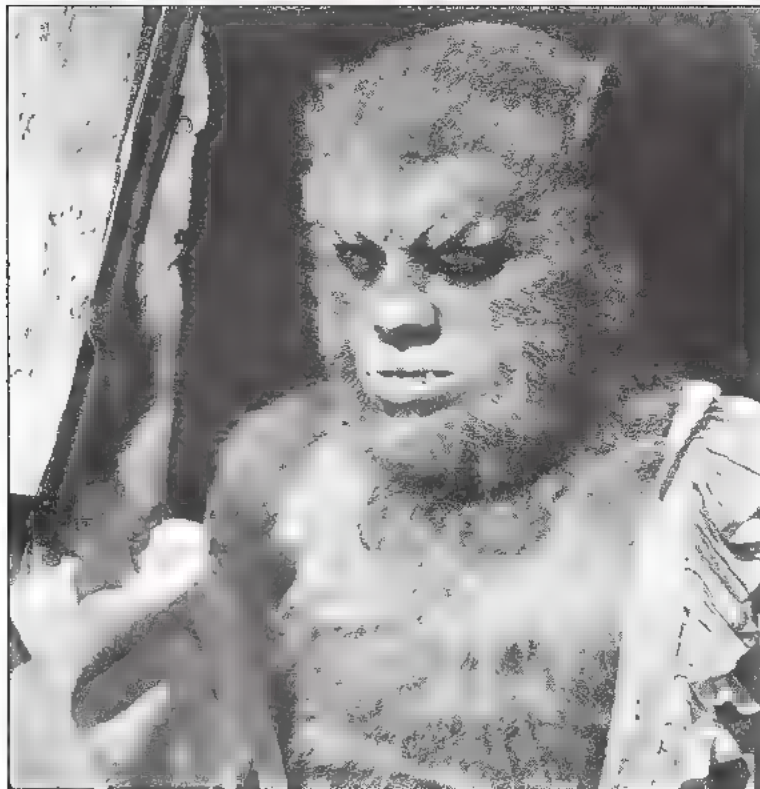
Hammer wasn't the only outlet for Ripper's talents. Most of the Hammer actors travelled back and forth between Hammer and Amicus in the 1960s, and Ripper was no exception. He had good roles in **THE DEADLY BEES** (1967) and **TORTURE GARDEN** (1968), in the latter playing opposite Burgess Meredith in the wraparound segment. Both films were directed by Freddie Francis.

Since his Hammer days, Ripper has been semi-retired. In 1980, he was a regular on the British TV series **BUTTERFLIES**, but since then he has worked very little, due in part to health problems.

Would a good part put Michael Ripper in front of the cameras again? "Well," he admitted, "the trouble is, my memory is ghastly! If somebody asked me to play a decent part, I would have to tell them that I would be a problem. What would be absolutely the job for me would be a television series that started off in the first episode with about three or four lines for me, and then in the second, a few more, and so on and on."

Whether or not Ripper ever returns to the screen, fans have a wealth of charming, detailed character studies from this man to cherish for the rest of our lives. When I asked John McCarty, author of the book *The Modern Horror Film* (Citadel, 1990) and an unabashed Hammer fan, if he could give me a quote on a favorite Michael Ripper role, he had this to say:

"I found his performance in **THE REPTILE** to be very real and endearing. What would a Hammer film be without him?"



Sherlock Holmes

and the Dreadful Business of the Naked Honeymooners

article and interviews by Richard Valley

It is 1969. London. In the managing director's office of Barclays Bank, Mr. Havelock-Smith (John Williams) greets Dr. Watson (Colin Blakely)—not Dr. John H. Watson, needless to say, but the grandson of that well-known Victorian physician.

"You must be quite proud of your heritage," beams Havelock-Smith. "To bear such an illustrious name . . ."

"Frankly," replies the good doctor, a veterinary from Saskatchewan who has journeyed to England for a convention concerning hoof-and-mouth disease, "I've considered changing it to Jones or Brown. Nobody would think of saying 'Elementary, my dear Jones' or 'Elementary, my dear Brown.' But if your name happens to be Dr. Watson . . ."

Thus begins Billy Wilder and I. A. L. Diamond's clever screenplay for *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*—and thus was the film itself supposed to begin, but it was not in the cards. When *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* premiered at New York's Radio City Music Hall in 1970, the film, originally intended as a three-hour roadshow attraction with intermission, was shorn of well over an hour's worth of material.

Among the missing adventures are "The Curious Case of the Upside-Down Room," "The Dreadful Business of the Naked Honeymooners," and an intriguing flashback to a bittersweet romance during Sherlock Holmes' university days.

The lost scenes have been something of a holy grail for both Sherlockians and film scholars. After all, not every movie contains several missing adventures of the world's greatest detective—and very few movies by so highly regarded a director as Billy Wilder are treated so shoddily.

Now, finally, Image Entertainment has been able to repair some—but only some—of the damage, with the release of the restored *PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* on laserdisc. The \$10 million Mirisch Production stars Robert Stephens as Holmes, Colin Blakely as Watson, Genevieve Page as Ilse Von Hoffmannstahl, Irene Handl as Mrs. Hudson, and Hammer veteran Christopher Lee as a singularly thin Mycroft Holmes. It is a magnificent cast in a sumptuous production.

Sadly, though, only a fraction of the much-coveted grail has been located.

"We found a lot of the naked honeymooners sequence," says Dennis Rood, the quality-control supervisor at Image. "We have the visual portion, complete, with original opticals and everything saved—but there's no audio. The upside-down room was another major sequence; it's half an hour long, but it's audio only. We were unable to locate the picture. The audio is obviously

finished, mixed, and scored, so the picture must have existed."

"The Curious Case of the Upside-Down Room" is one of two excised scenes that featured George Benson as Inspector Lestrade. (The other is the film's original conclusion, in which the Scotland Yarder arrives at Baker Street to ask the despondent detective, grieving over the death of a woman spy, to help track down Jack the Ripper.) The sequence concerns the efforts of Watson to temporarily wean Holmes from his drug dependency by presenting him with a mystery. ("What he needs is a bit of a jolt—preferably a headless corpse—lying in the middle of a snow-covered field—with no footprints around . . .")

What Holmes gets instead is a blind piano-tuner named Plimsoll (David Kossoff), who finds, in one of his upstairs rooms, a corpse on the floor and the furniture on the ceiling! The

clues include a playing card, a stuffed owl, a meat-cleaver, a Chinese newspaper, a baby's rattle, and a copy of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*.

Holmes sees through the overabundance of evidence, of course, and fingers the good doctor as the "murderer." The master sleuth pretends to give up drugs in order to placate Watson, and the sequence ends happily for all—except possibly poor Lestrade, who remains standing on his head in the upside-down room, still trying to solve the "crime."

"The Dreadful Business of the Naked Honeymooners" is hardly a puzzle one would associate with the sex-shy Sherlock, but it figured prominently in the original production. Returning from Constantinople, "where Holmes had been summoned by Sultan Abdul Hamid to investigate an indiscretion on the part of his favorite



Robert Stephens and Colin Blakely



LEFT: Dr. Watson (Colin Blakely) puts pen to paper to reveal *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, under the watchful eyes of his friend (Robert Stephens as Holmes) and director (the great Billy Wilder). **RIGHT:** A victim lies on the floor (or is it the ceiling?) in the Curious Case of the Upside-Down Room.

concubine," the Baker Street duo is informed by the ship's captain that two bodies have been found in Cabin A on Deck B. The nude newlyweds enter the picture when Watson decides to solve the case himself, and immediately launches his investigation—in Cabin B on Deck A.

Bret Hampton, chief editor at Image, thinks that the company's laserdisc release contains all that will ever be found of *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*.

"It seems to me that, because of the way these things get moved around to different studios, this is all that's left," claims Hampton. "The quality of the naked honeymooners sequence is as good as the rest of the film. It's excellent; I've seen new films that don't look as good as this. And the sound that we found is fine. But the problem was finding a matched set—both sound and picture."

According to Rood, "The materials were all located in Los Angeles at MGM. Apparently they were at Pinewood Studios until 1985, when Ron Haver, who had restored *A STAR IS BORN*, discovered them and had them shipped over here. They've been sitting there at MGM ever since. MGM was nice enough to let us go through everything they had. They had boxes of 35mm negative optical tracks. I listened and listened, and then I heard the upside-down room sequence."

Unfortunately, nothing was unearthed beyond what Ron Haver had found nine years ago.

"We can always hope to find more," says Rood, "but it looks pretty dry out there."

Hampton agrees. "It's been 20 years since the movie was made, and it is not considered a classic, so I don't think they worried about preserving it. If it wasn't destroyed, it's going to be hard to find through normal avenues. I can tell you one related story: Another project that I worked on was *ALIEN*, when they redid it for laserdisc. There were some scenes and screen tests that were added to the disc, and some of the material wasn't found until they were ready to tear down the studio where it was stored. That's the only reason they found the stuff; they weren't even looking for it."

Assisting Rood and Hampton on the project was Stephen Pickard, who had actually worked on the production in 1969.

"From 1969 to 1974, I worked at Pinewood studios in the sound department in Theater Five," remembers Pickard. "They started building for *THE PRIVATE LIFE* in 1968, and it started shooting in May of 1969. They were building Baker Street quite a few months ahead of time. It was magnificent; it was a marvelous piece. As a matter of fact, when the film was finished the set remained there for quite a few years. Other pictures used it, including the *Carry On* comedies."

Pickard had the opportunity to work with the legendary Billy Wilder during post-synch. "Billy Wilder and Izzy Diamond were both in attendance all the time. They were both very pleasant, but I found Diamond more talkative, more chatty. Mr. Wilder was quieter. He still had his sense of humor, though."

"Working on *PRIVATE LIFE*, I saw maybe 90% of the cut footage, and a couple of other minor pieces. The upside-down room actually covered the entire beginning of the film. Originally, the prologue starts in modern day, with the descendant of Watson arriving in London and going to the bank to retrieve Watson's manuscripts. Then you go into the titles and, after the titles, there's a short train sequence with Holmes and Watson and another gentleman. Then you go to Baker Street, Lestrade comes in, and then you go to the upside-down room itself. From there, you go to the ballerina sequence, which is in the film as released. After the ballerina sequence, it's the naked honeymooners, and then it's the theatrical version until they travel to Inverness. It's during the Inverness sequence, when the girl and Holmes are talking, that you flash back to the university sequence."

Image has given their Collector's Edition Laserdisc the deluxe treatment, with a digital film transfer of the theatrical version of *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* in its original 2.35:1 Panavision aspect ratio, the haunting Miklos Rozsa score (never given a soundtrack release) isolated on right digital and analog tracks, the complete video of the naked honeymooners sequence, the complete audio of the upside-down room sequence, an interview with editor Ernest Walter, rare production stills, the complete script, music cue sheets, pressbook materials, and the theatrical trailer.

According to Hampton, the script gives viewers a good idea of Wilder and Diamond's original intentions. "It's the way Wilder wanted to show it. He and I. A. L. Diamond considered the script that appears on the laser-disc their final script; that was the way the movie was going to be done. They didn't want one line of dialogue changed. It would have been a roadshow picture, which were on the outs by then. To make it into a regular, two-hour film, the studio cut out any sequence that they felt detracted from the main story."

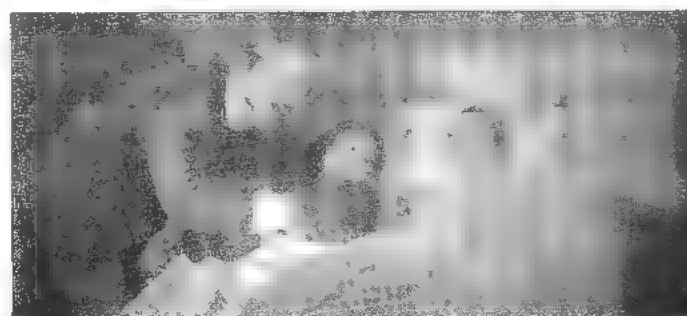
Will the rest of *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* ever be found? Perhaps. Certainly, it can't hurt that some high profile filmmakers would like to see it happen.

"Martin Scorsese has been wanting to restore the film," says Hampton. "Scorsese started a foundation to preserve films. They restore a certain number of films every year, and *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* was one that had been on his list, because he's such a Billy Wilder fan. We talked to the people who work for Scorsese, but they didn't know of any more footage than we did."

"Still, we have almost an hour's worth of supplemental material," enthuses Rood. "We subtitled the naked honeymooner sequence, since we didn't have the audio. We had a script and I had to lip-read for many, many hours, script in hand. Unfortunately, Colin Blakely decided to ad lib at a few choice moments. I tried, but we could not read his lips. So there's a few moments where you'll see his mouth move and there's no titles to go with it. We called Billy Wilder's office on a couple of occasions, but we were unable to secure his help. He's either left the film behind, or he's busy with other projects."

Or he may still be heartbroken over the treatment suffered by *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* back in 1970.

"It's a shame," agrees Rood. "It's still an amazing film. What we're trying to do is give a taste of what it might have been."



Dr. Watson (Colin Blakely) investigates the Dreadful Business of the Naked Honeymooners, only to find that two presumed corpses are alive and kicking—and screaming up a storm!

It is, perhaps, nostalgia for that mysterious, bygone era, so eloquently described by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, which has helped perpetuate the fascination with the world of Victorian crime in foggy, gas-lit London. He takes the reader into a world before computers and forensic science; a world in which Sherlock Holmes stands head and shoulders above all other heroes of detective fiction.

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MURDER

BY RADIO

BY BILL PALMER

The Shadow

A chilling organ rendition of "Omphale's Spinning Wheel" by Saint-Saens . . . "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows!" . . . (diabolical laughter) . . . theme music up and out . . .

"Once again your neighborhood Blue Coal dealer brings you the thrilling adventures of THE SHADOW . . . the hard and relentless fight of one man against the forces of evil. These dramatizations are designed to demonstrate forcibly to old and young alike that crime does not pay!" . . . music up . . . segue to neutral background . . .

"The Shadow, mysterious character who aids the forces of law and order, is in reality Lamont Cranston, wealthy young man about town. Several years ago in the Orient, Cranston learned a strange and mysterious secret . . . the hypnotic power to cloud men's minds so they cannot see him. Cranston's friend and companion, the lovely Margo Lane, is the only person who knows to whom the voice of the invisible Shadow belongs. Today's drama . . ."

The Shadow, who first appeared on Thursday, July 31, 1930, over the CBS Network on Street & Smith's DETECTIVE STORY HOUR, was merely the announcer/narrator of stories dramatized from the pulp *Detective Story Magazine*. Christened by Harry Engman Chariot, the writer who adapted the stories, The Shadow was first played by James LaCurto and later by Frank Readick, Jr.

From September 6, 1931 until June 5, 1932, The Shadow (Readick) hosted a 30-minute mystery drama and contest on the BLUE COAL RADIO REVUE. From October 1, 1931 until September 22, 1932, The Shadow introduced stories from the current issue of *Love Story* magazine on LOVE STORY DRAMA (later called LOVE STORY HOUR). Robert Hardy Andrews also played The Shadow for five broadcasts from January 5, 1932 to February 2, 1932. (The program, sponsored by the Hachmeister Lind Company, was now formally called THE SHADOW.)

THE SHADOW, again starring Readick and sponsored by Blue Coal, moved to NBC on October 12, 1932, and ran until March 27, 1935.

On Sunday, September 26, 1937, a new Shadow was born on the Mutual Broadcasting Network in the episode entitled THE DEATH HOUSE RESCUE, written by Edward Hale Bierstadt. The character of Lamont Cranston was fully developed, and The Shadow, no longer merely a narrator, was now a crimefighter. Twenty-two-year-old Orson Welles took over the title role, with Agnes Moorehead as the first Margo Lane. Welles lasted until the fall of 1938, when he became an overnight sensation with his panic-causing broadcast of THE WAR OF THE WORLDS.



Your Obedient Servant, Orson Welles

On September 25th, Bill Johnstone took over the role and played it until September 26, 1943, when he was replaced by Bret Morrison. John Archer, and later Steve Courtleigh, continued the role until December 9, 1945, when Bret Morrison returned and became the voice of The Shadow until the last show, MURDER BY THE SEA, aired December 26, 1954.

The Shadow also appeared on the summer show QUICK AS A FLASH, with John Archer (and later Bret Morrison) playing the crimefighter. The highlight of this quiz show featured radio's top detectives alternating in a weekly mystery drama.

After Agnes Moorehead left the series, the role of Margo Lane was played, first by Marjorie Anderson, and then by Jeanette Nolan (for one show, on April 7, 1940), Laura Mae Carpenter, Lesley Woods, Grace Matthews, and Gertrude Warner.

Shrevie, the talkative cabbie, was played by Keenan Wynn, Alan Reed, and Mandel Kramer. Commissioner Weston was played by many actors, including Ted de Corsia, Kenny Delmar, Santos Ortega, and Dwight Weist.

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The titles of THE SHADOW programs rivaled those of I LOVE A MYSTERY for sheer atmosphere: DEATH

MURDER

BY RADIO

BY BILL PALMER

The Shadow

A chilling organ rendition of "Omphale's Spinning Wheel" by Saint-Saens . . . "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows!" . . . (diabolical laughter) . . . theme music up and out . . .

"Once again your neighborhood Blue Coal dealer brings you the thrilling adventures of THE SHADOW . . . the hard and relentless fight of one man against the forces of evil. These dramatizations are designed to demonstrate forcibly to old and young alike that crime does not pay!" . . . music up . . . segue to neutral background . . .

"The Shadow, mysterious character who aids the forces of law and order, is in reality Lamont Cranston, wealthy young man about town. Several years ago in the Orient, Cranston learned a strange and mysterious secret . . . the hypnotic power to cloud men's minds so they cannot see him. Cranston's friend and companion, the lovely Margo Lane, is the only person who knows to whom the voice of the invisible Shadow belongs. Today's drama . . ."

The Shadow, who first appeared on Thursday, July 31, 1930, over the CBS Network on Street & Smith's DETECTIVE STORY HOUR, was merely the announcer/narrator of stories dramatized from the pulp *Detective Story Magazine*. Christened by Harry Engman Chariot, the writer who adapted the stories, The Shadow was first played by James LaCurto and later by Frank Readick, Jr.

From September 6, 1931 until June 5, 1932, The Shadow (Readick) hosted a 30-minute mystery drama and contest on the BLUE COAL RADIO REVUE. From October 1, 1931 until September 22, 1932, The Shadow introduced stories from the current issue of *Love Story* magazine on LOVE STORY DRAMA (later called LOVE STORY HOUR). Robert Hardy Andrews also played The Shadow for five broadcasts from January 5, 1932 to February 2, 1932. (The program, sponsored by the Hachmeister Lind Company, was now formally called THE SHADOW.)

THE SHADOW, again starring Readick and sponsored by Blue Coal, moved to NBC on October 12, 1932, and ran until March 27, 1935.

On Sunday, September 26, 1937, a new Shadow was born on the Mutual Broadcasting Network in the episode entitled THE DEATH HOUSE RESCUE, written by Edward Hale Bierstadt. The character of Lamont Cranston was fully developed, and The Shadow, no longer merely a narrator, was now a crimefighter. Twenty-two-year-old Orson Welles took over the title role, with Agnes Moorehead as the first Margo Lane. Welles lasted until the fall of 1938, when he became an overnight sensation with his panic-causing broadcast of THE WAR OF THE WORLDS.



Your Obedient Servant, Orson Welles

On September 25th, Bill Johnstone took over the role and played it until September 26, 1943, when he was replaced by Bret Morrison. John Archer, and later Steve Courtleigh, continued the role until December 9, 1945, when Bret Morrison returned and became the voice of The Shadow until the last show, MURDER BY THE SEA, aired December 26, 1954.

The Shadow also appeared on the summer show QUICK AS A FLASH, with John Archer (and later Bret Morrison) playing the crimefighter. The highlight of this quiz show featured radio's top detectives alternating in a weekly mystery drama.

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THE GHOST WALKS AGAIN, written by Jerry Devine and broadcast on March 16, 1941, is notable in that this show was used as a textbook example of what poor Margo had to endure in show after show. It was presented to scripters as a sample of how to write THE SHADOW.

The story opens at night in the graveyard of a small New England town. Two men discover that the 200-year-old grave of the first governor, Sir Roger Mathis, has been recently disturbed. Standing above the open grave is a ghostly, dust-covered, Puritan-clothed figure, who warns them that "the word of Sir Roger was law, and to break the law meant death."

Meanwhile, the town leaders have gathered at the Great Hall to discuss opening the building as a museum and charging admission to the public. Built by Sir Roger, and always used as a private gathering place for the descendants of the first settlers, the Great Hall still contains some ancient torture devices. The meeting is interrupted when two men are found killed in the torture press, each holding an ancient death warrant signed by Sir Roger!

After three more men are found dead, the Sheriff calls Lamont Cranston, who agrees to investigate. Since the ghost of Sir Roger has been sighted several times in the Great Hall at midnight, Lamont and Margo decide to lay in wait.

That night, Sir Roger appears on the upstairs balcony, but when our heroes venture upstairs he is nowhere to be found. Searching the balcony walls of the Great Hall for secret passages, Lamont and Margo meet Edward Crossman, leader of the pro-museum faction. Edward, nephew of the anti-museum leader Silas Crossman, tells them that he is in charge of the Great Hall's restoration; he has the original building plans, which he promises to give them later. Then Edward leaves.

The Shadow questions Silas about Sir Roger and the murders, and promises him that the murderer will not go free.

Later that night, with the plans in hand, Lamont and Margo search the Great Hall. Margo becomes separated from Lamont and is captured by the ghost! She is dragged below to a secret, sound-proof torture chamber, where she is tied up and threatened with a white-hot branding iron and the torture press. At the last moment, the Shadow rescues Margo and is barely able to escape as the murderer, fearing immediate arrest, sets the building (and himself) on fire.

Author, columnist, and reviewer Bill Palmer is a collector of anything "mysterious," and the former VP of the N. Y. chapter of MWA. This article originally appeared in Mystery Scene.

The simple formula worked time and again. The Shadow "appeared" only twice in each show.

THE SHADOW was so successful that, when word reached Henry William Ralston, the general manager of Street & Smith, that readers were asking for a magazine featuring the character, he decided to put one out before anyone else. In April, 1931, *The Shadow Magazine* was published with the first story, "The Living Shadow," written by Walter B. Gibson under the pseudonym Maxwell Grant. The pulp magazine lasted for 325 issues, ending with the Summer 1949 story "The Whispering Eyes."

In the 1960s, Belmont published nine Shadow paperback originals written by Dennis Lynds. There were also a number of attempts to do justice to Cranston and Company in comic-book form, the most successful of which

was drawn by Michael Kaluta, whose work best evoked the dark, brooding, sinister times of the 30s.

The Shadow made his first film appearance in the summer of 1931, introducing six short "two-reelers" adapted from *Detective Story Magazine* as part of Universal's "Shadow Detective Series."

In 1937, Grand National Pictures cast Rod La Rocque in the dual role of The Shadow and Lamont Cranston (sic) in the film *THE SHADOW STRIKES*, which was loosely based on Maxwell Grant's story "The Ghost of the Manor." In the movie, Lamont, a suave criminologist, seeks revenge for the death of his father.

La Rocque returned in the 1938 film *INTERNATIONAL CRIME* as Lamont Cranston, a radio crime reporter writing under the pen name The Shadow. Cranston waged a personal war against espionage agents and prewar fifth columnists, aided by his lovely new assistant, Phoebe (!) Lane.

In 1940, Columbia Pictures cast Victor Jory in the title role of a 15-episode serial called *THE SHADOW*. Aided for the first time on screen by Margo Lane (Veda Ann Borg) and taxi-driver Shrevie (George Chandler), The Shadow fought The Black Tiger, a criminal mastermind who possessed the power of invisibility.

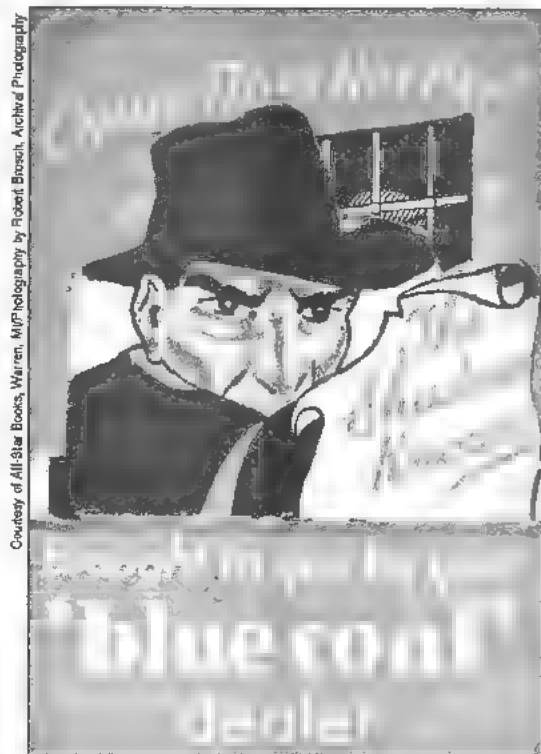
In 1946, Monogram released three films featuring Kane Richmond as The Shadow and Barbara Reed as Margo: *THE SHADOW RETURNS*, *BEHIND THE MASK*, and *THE MISSING LADY*.

In 1958, Republic released *BOURBON STREET SHADOWS* (also called *INVISIBLE AVENGER*) starring Richard Derr in which the Shadow, having learned the power of invisibility from an Oriental mystic named Jogendra, played by Mark Daniels, goes to New Orleans to look into the death of a Dixieland musician.

And now comes Alec Baldwin as Lamont Cranston!

Well, why not? In this nostalgic era of Superman, Batman, and The Flash, and after a 36-year celluloid retirement, The Shadow is ripe for a comeback.

"The weed of crime bears bitter fruit. Crime does not pay. The Shadow knows!"



Courtesy of All Star Books, Warren, MI/Photography by Robert Bosch, Archival Photography



HAMMETT

IN HOLLYWOOD

BY MARK DAWIDZIAK

To Raymond Chandler, he was the writer who "took murder out of the Venetian vase and dropped it into the alley." To Ross Macdonald, he was "the first American writer to use the detective story for the purposes of a major novelist to present a vision, blazing if disenchanted, of our lives."

You don't have to be Philip Marlowe or Lew Archer to figure out that mystery masters Chandler and Macdonald are talking about the spiritual leader of their hard-boiled school of detective fiction: Samuel Dashiell Hammett. In just five novels and fewer than 70 short stories, Dashiell Hammett crystallized American mystery writing with a two-fisted clarity and raw honesty that set it apart from its genteel British cousin. The tough and tenacious private detective took his rightful place next to such cerebral sleuths as Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, Chesterton's Father Brown, and Christie's Hercule Poirot.

Hammett's influence cannot be understated. Macdonald was not exaggerating when he called him "the great innovator who invented the hard-boiled detective novel." True, and Hammett also invented seminal detective characters. Sam Spade, the private eye prototype introduced in *The Maltese Falcon* (Knopf, 1930), is the literary ancestor of Chandler's Marlowe, Macdonald's Archer, and generations of gumshoes who tried to follow in his footsteps. Nick and Nora Charles, the husband-and-wife team featured in *The Thin Man* (Knopf, 1934), were endlessly imitated in movies and television series.

But those five novels not only gave us such classic mystery figures as Spade and the Continental Op, they set the stage for the film noir. Peter Wolfe, in his *Beams Falling: The Art of Dashiell Hammett* (Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1980), credits *The Glass Key* (Knopf, 1931) with having the most impact on this moody style of filmmaking: "This grimness of tone and coloring might have influenced and even helped create the genre of film noir in the 1930s and 1940s."

So mystery fans had reason to celebrate this past May 27th. The date marked the 100th anniversary of Dashiell Hammett's birth in St. Mary's County, Maryland.

Though the Hammett centennial is certain to have inspired comment and celebration in San Francisco, the city most associated with his fiction, the author's association with another California town is equally intriguing. Any study of Dashiell Hammett must take you through Hollywood, not once, not twice, but at least three times.

First, you must consider Hammett in Hollywood as a detective, a screenwriter, an organizer of the Writers Guild, a recruiter for anti-Nazi rallies, a spokesman for liberal causes, and, most tragically, a lost literary soul who swallowed the vast sums of money Tinseltown threw at him while drinking away his will to write.



Photo courtesy of the Bettman Archive



LEFT: *CITY STREETS* (1931) starred an unlikely candidate for a Dashiell Hammett story: Gary Cooper as a Westerner in love with a gangster's stepdaughter (played by Sylvia Sidney). RIGHT: The first *MALTESE FALCON* (1931) featured Ricardo Cortez as Sam Spade and Bebe Daniels as Ruth Wonderly.

Second, you must look at Hammett in Hollywood as a rich source of material for movies, radio shows, and TV programs. Although Hammett's collected works do not make much of a stack, the pile was thoroughly exploited by Hollywood. An author is fortunate if just one of his books is treated well and wisely by filmmakers. In a span of less than 10 years, three of Hammett's five novels were turned into films cherished as screen classics: *THE THIN MAN* (1934), director John Huston's 1941 version of *THE MALTESE FALCON*, and the second movie adaptation of *THE GLASS KEY* (1942).

Finally, we can look at Hammett in Hollywood as a literary figure so fascinating that he jumps onto the screen as a heroic character played by the likes of Jason Robards, Frederic Forrest, and James Coburn.

"I was born in St. Mary's County, Maryland, between the Potomac and Patuxent rivers on May 27, 1894," Hammett wrote in a 1924 letter published in *Black Mask* magazine. "I was a very fat baby, but grew up tall and thin."

In 1915, at the age of 21, the tall, thin Hammett joined the Pinkerton Detective Agency, first as a clerk, then as a

field operative. He stayed with the agency's Baltimore office until June 1918, when he enlisted in the U. S. Army. Discharged honorably at the rank of sergeant, Hammett returned to detective work with Pinkerton's in Spokane and San Francisco.

His career as a Pinkerton op gave him the background to write realistic detective fiction, and it provided him with his first brush with Hollywood. In 1921, Hammett was one of the Pinkerton detectives helping lawyers defend silent-screen comedian Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle. After a party at a San Francisco hotel, an actress named Virginia Rappe died of peritonitis caused by a ruptured urinary bladder. The immediate assumption, cemented by a frenzy of yellow journalism, was that Arbuckle had raped the young woman, his 300-pounds-plus weight causing the rupture. Though eventually acquitted, Arbuckle had already been found guilty in the court of public opinion. The scandal ended his career.

Hammett, one of the agency's best shadow men, was assigned to follow key witnesses. Later, Hammett would remember Arbuckle emerging from an elevator in the

LEFT: *WOMAN IN THE DARK* (1934) teamed a post-Kong Fay Wray with a pre-Ninotchka Melvyn Douglas. RIGHT: The first film version of *The Glass Key* (released in 1935) suffered from a typically-stiff George Raft performance.



lobby of San Francisco's Plaza Hotel. They stared at each other. "Arbuckle's eyes were those of a man who expected to be regarded as a monster, but was not yet injured to it," Hammett recalled. "He glared at me... It was amusing. I was working for his attorneys at the time, gathering information for his defense."

The ravages of tuberculosis forced Hammett out of detective work. In the fall of 1922, he began writing for publication. A year later, the pulp magazine *Black Mask* published "Arson Plus," his first story featuring a chubby and nameless operative for the Continental Detective Agency. Certainly partly based on James Wright, a Baltimore Pinkerton detective, the Continental Op trudged his way through the pages of *Black Mask* for the rest of the Roaring Twenties. "Mainly, of course," wrote William F. Nolan in *Hammett: A Life at the Edge* (Congdon & Weed, 1983), "the Op was Hammett himself, and many of the Op's cases were thinly fictionalized versions of real cases Hammett had worked on as a Pinkerton."

Hammett had been a reader of *Black Mask*, and he was certain that he could write better detective stories than what the low-paying pulp had to offer. Cracking with authenticity, the Op stories became Hammett's hard-boiled answer to the fanciful mystery plots constructed without research, without logic, without even a basic understanding of how a detective operates.

"A fellow who takes detective stories seriously," Hammett wrote, "I am annoyed by the stupid recurrence of these same blunders in book after book. It would be silly to insist that nobody who has not been a detective should write detective stories, but it is certainly not unreasonable to ask anyone who is going to write a book of any sort to make some effort at least to learn something about his subject. Most writers do. Only detective story writers seem to be free from a sense of obligation in this direction, and, curiously, the more established and prolific detective story writers seem to be the worst offenders."

The Op was the opposite of Sherlock Holmes. "I didn't deliberately keep him nameless," Hammett explained, "but he got through 'Arson Plus' and 'Slippery Fingers' [the first Op stories] without needing a name, so I suppose I may as well let him run along that way. I'm not sure he's entitled to a name, anyhow. He's more or less of a type: the private detective who oftenest is successful: neither the derby-hatted and broad-toed blockhead of one school of fiction, nor the all-knowing, infallible genius of another. I've worked with several of him."

Through the Op, Hammett explained his approach to writing and his devotion to the *Black Mask* detective story: "I like being a detective, like the work. And liking work makes you want to do it as well as you can. Otherwise there'd be no sense to it. That's the fix I am

in. I don't know anything else, don't enjoy anything else, don't want to know or enjoy anything else. You can't weigh that against any sum of money."

Through *Black Mask*, Hammett started a new line in detective fiction. "As Dostoevsky said about Gogol (I think)," Ross Macdonald said, "we all came out from under Hammett's black mask."

The Op is the hero of Hammett's first two novels, *Red Harvest* (Knopf, 1929) and *The Dain Curse* (Knopf, 1929). Even before these books were published, the mystery writer was being courted by Hollywood. In April 1928, the William Fox Studios planned to film several of Hammett's stories. He made the trip to Hollywood and suggested an original screenplay, but the plans fell through.

In 1930, there were more overtures from Hollywood. Warner Bros. shelled out \$8,500 for the film rights to *The Maltese Falcon*, Hammett's third novel. And Paramount producer David O. Selznick asked his boss, B. P.

Schulberg, if he could place Hammett under contract. Schulberg agreed. Paramount also purchased the film rights to *Red Harvest*. Novelist/journalist/playwright Ben Hecht was given the assignment of turning Hammett's gritty story into an action/comedy with musical interludes. The final screenplay was credited to Garrett Fort, and the film, *ROADHOUSE NIGHTS* (1930), bears little resemblance to *Red Harvest*. Actually, two more faithful adaptations are Japanese director Akira Kurosawa's *YOJIMBO* (a 1961 samurai reworking) and Italian director Sergio Leone's *A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS* (a 1964 spaghetti Western). Though neither film credits Hammett's story about the Op playing two rival factions against each other, Kurosawa has acknowledged the writer's influence.



THE THIN MAN (1934)

ROADHOUSE NIGHTS, however, was best remembered (if at all) as the film debut of Jimmy Durante, who performed a few numbers with comedy partners Lou Clayton and Eddie Jackson. The nominal stars were Charles Ruggles and the tragic Helen Morgan (the 20s torch singer who died 11 years later, at age 41, of cirrhosis of the liver caused by alcoholism).

But Hammett did complete his original story for Paramount, a seven-page treatment he called "After School." Max Marcin and Oliver H. P. Garrett fleshed out this concept into a screenplay, which was handed over to director Rouben Mamoulian. Titled *CITY STREETS* and released in 1931, the Hammett story became a stylish vehicle for Paramount star Gary Cooper, who portrayed a lanky Westerner lured into the rackets by his love for a gangster's stepdaughter (winningly played by Sylvia Sydney, a last-minute replacement for Clara Bow).

A sophisticated and innovative gangster film, *CITY STREETS* is nothing like the violent crime dramas made by Warner Bros. at the time. "You know, there are



Hammett goes to the dogs! Nick and Nora Charles popped up on television in the persons of Phyllis Kirk and Peter Lawford (LEFT) and Jo Ann Pflug and Craig Stevens (RIGHT). OPPOSITE PAGE: William Powell and Myrna Loy, who sparkled like fine wine in six *Thin Man* movies, were a hard act to follow. The original Asta (real name: Skippy) also played Mr. Smith in *THE AWFUL TRUTH* (1937), George in *BRINGING UP BABY* (1938), and the ghostly Mr. Atlas in *TOPPER TAKES A TRIP* (1939).

10 killings in this film," Mamoulian pointed out with pride, "and you don't actually see one of them."

CITY STREETS was not, as widely reported, Sidney's film debut, but it was her first starring role. "Sylvia is a smash hit," *Screenland* wrote in its review, "by far the finest actress of the new ingenue crop." The sentiment was echoed by most critics, including Mordaunt Hall of the *New York Times*.

Hammett left Paramount at the end of 1930. Though he worked on several films, *CITY STREETS* was his only screen credit at the studio. Living at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel and the Knickerbocker, he worked on the proofs of *The Glass Key* and on getting drunk most every night. Coming off a bad drunk in November 1930, he met aspiring playwright Lillian Hellman at Musso and Frank's, the famous Hollywood Boulevard restaurant.

"We met when I was 24 and he was 36 in a restaurant in Hollywood," Hellman wrote in her introduction to *The Big Knockover*, a posthumous collection of Hammett stories. "The five-day drunk had left the wonderful face looking rumpled, and the very tall thin figure was tired and sagged. We talked of T. S. Eliot, although I no longer remember what we said, and then went and sat in his car and talked at each other and over each other until it was daylight."

The on-again-off-again Hammett/Hellman relationship lasted 30 years.

Hammett resolved to leave Hollywood in 1931, yet it was difficult to quit the party scene. A regular at the Brown Derby, he was having a swell time with such pals as humorist S. J. Perelman, Harpo Marx, and Ben Hecht's writing partner, Charles MacArthur. He finally broke away for New York in the fall.

Before he left, though, Warner Bros. released the first of its three film versions of *The Maltese Falcon*. Known as *DANGEROUS FEMALE* when shown on TV today, the May 1931 release stars Ricardo Cortez as Spade, Bebe Daniels as Ruth Wonderly, Dudley Digges as Gutman, Una Merkel as Effie, and Dwight Frye (the mad Renfield in the same year's *DRACULA*) as gunsel Wilmer Cook.

There is a tendency among film scholars to curtly dismiss the two earlier screen adaptations of *The Maltese Falcon* and skip happily on to Huston's 1941 masterpiece. The standard technique is to merely mention that there were two unsuccessful attempts to film the novel, and then drop the subject like a lead falcon. They are not, after all, the stuff that dreams are made of.

But, of the two, the Cortez/Daniels effort deserves some attention and rehabilitation. It's not a bad movie. It certainly suffers in comparison with the Huston version—most films do—yet it's interesting from more than just an archaeological standpoint. Although Cortez's Spade is a bit too suave and Roy Del Ruth's direction is a bit too slick, the 1931 *MALTESE FALCON* remains miles ahead of the second version, *SATAN MET A LADY* (1936).

Yes, Cortez lacks fire, and his performance is obvious enough to make you appreciate Humphrey Bogart's Spade all the more, but he merits close attention if for no other reason than he is the first. *SATAN MET A LADY*, however, is every bit as dismissable as film historians maintain. A star turn for Bette Davis, the movie claims to be "based on a novel by Dashiell Hammett," yet it never states which one. It's just as well.

Directed by William Dieterle, *SATAN MET A LADY* comes off as a misguided attempt to film *The Maltese Falcon* in the lighthearted style of Hammett's *The Thin*

Man. Warren William plays Ted Shayne, the Spade substitute, in the manner of a vaudeville magician—a little too loud, a little too smarmy. Cutman has been transformed into Mrs. Barabbas (played by Alison Skipworth), who is searching for a ram's horn crammed full of jewels.

Huston's 1941 film is so faithful to the source material that you're shocked by the few times it deviates from Hammett's book. *SATAN MET A LADY* reverses the equation. It strays so ludicrously far afield that you're positively shocked when someone utters an original line.

Back in New York, Hammett struggled to finish his fifth novel, *The Thin Man*. It was the only novel Hellman saw in the writing process. The title, of course, did not refer to the book's detective hero, Nick Charles. A dapper jacket photo of the extremely thin Hammett, though, planted that notion in the public mind. It was assumed that Hammett was Nick, and Nick was the Thin Man.

Drinking and wisecracking their way through the book, Nick and Nora were not the average married couple depicted in detective stories or, for that matter, in most literature of the day. They actually liked being with each other. They had fun.

"Maybe there are better writers in the world," Hammett wrote after creating Nick and Nora Charles, "but nobody ever invented a more insufferably smug pair of characters."

The evaluation is unfair and overly harsh. Okay, the marathon drinking looks bad in the 90s, and, as a novel, *The Thin Man* may not be prized by mystery fans—but the beguiling characters of Nick and Nora are. "As

sleuths they were a refreshing change of pace from the hard-boiled private eye Hammett himself had introduced a decade earlier," Dennis Dooley wrote in his *Dashiell Hammett* (Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1984), a study of the author's fiction.

"It was a happy day when I was given half the manuscript to read and was told that I was Nora," Hellman recalled. "It was nice to be Nora, married to Nick Charles, maybe one of the few marriages in modern literature where the man and woman like each other and have a fine time together."

Hammett couldn't let her euphoria last. In true Nick style, he teasingly told Hellman that she was also the model for "the silly girl" and "the villainess." She didn't know if he was joking.

Hot on the heels of the novel's publication, MGM released a film version with William Powell and Myrna Loy as Nick and Nora. With Skippy, a wire-hair terrier, playing Asta, Powell and Loy sleuthed their way into America's Depression-laden hearts.

Making his film debut as gigolo Chris Jorgenson was a young Cuban-American actor named Cesar Romero.

"I showed up on the set the first day, and it was just a blur of activity," Romero recalled during a 1992 interview. "Everybody was running in different directions. There was Myrna Loy. There was William Powell. There was Maureen O'Sullivan. Nobody stopped to talk to me. Nobody said anything to me. Nobody said hi. I didn't know what to do. So I went up to Bill Powell and introduced myself. He smiled at me and said, 'We'll be doing things, won't we?' Then he was off and running."





Considered one of the rare perfectly-cast motion pictures, 1941's *THE MALTESE FALCON* is also one of the greatest detective movies—perhaps the greatest. LEFT: Effie Perrine and Sam Spade (played by Lee Patrick and Humphrey Bogart) discuss business with client Brigid O'Shaughnessy (Mary Astor). RIGHT: Joel Cairo (Peter Lorre) temporarily has the upper hand. OPPOSITE PAGE: Humphrey Bogart as Sam Spade ponders the cause of all the trouble: the Black Bird.

"An old character actor came up to me and said, 'Don't let it get to you. It's always crazy at first.' But Bill Powell and I got to be very good friends. He was a charming man with a brilliant sense of humor.

"But things never did slow down on that set. The director was Woody Van Dyke, who shot movies so fast he was known as One-take Woody. If you can believe it, we shot that movie in only 18 days."

Speed proved to be an ally of quality for this frantic filming. The pace of shooting is reflected in the breathless pace of the film. And the screenplay by husband-and-wife team Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich stayed very close to the spirit and structure of Hammett's novel. The formula was so successful that it spawned five sequels with Powell and Loy. *AFTER THE THIN MAN* (1936), also directed by Van Dyke, was based on a story by Hammett. *ANOTHER THIN MAN* (1939) was a Goodrich and Hackett script based on a concept cooked up by Hammett. After the third movie, Hammett had no input into the series, which breezed along with *SHADOW OF THE THIN MAN* (1941), *THE THIN MAN GOES HOME* (1944), and *SONG OF THE THIN MAN* (1947).

The public couldn't get enough of Mr. and Mrs. Charles. In 1941, NBC started *THE THIN MAN* on a long radio run with Lester Damon and Claudia Morgan as Nick and Nora. The series ran long enough for Morgan to be teamed with three more Nicks: Les Tremayne, Joseph Curtin, and David Gothard. For a while, the program was sponsored by Pabst Blue Ribbon beer, so the martini-swilling Nick and Nora were forced to quench their considerable thirsts with tall glasses of Pabst.

In 1957, *THE THIN MAN* began a two-season run as a half-hour TV series with Peter Lawford and Phyllis Kirk as Nick and Nora. "It wasn't as bad as it sounds," said author and mystery historian Ric Meyers. "By the time Lawford and Kirk came along, there wasn't much

life left in the formula, but the show managed to be lively and entertaining. One problem was that you obviously didn't have Powell and Loy. Another was that you couldn't work up much of a mystery in 30 minutes."

In *The Peter Lawford Story* (Carroll & Graf, 1988), the bio she wrote with Ted Schwarz, Patricia Seaton Lawford claims that Lawford hated Kirk and suggested to producer Sam Marx that they kill Nora so that he could carry the series alone. Make of it what you will. The gracious Kirk always received high praise from coworkers.

Two more attempts to revive *The Thin Man* ended in disaster. *NICK AND NORA*, the 1975 TV movie starring Craig Stevens and Jo Ann Pflug, was as bad as it sounds. *NICK & NORA*, the Broadway musical version starring Barry Bostwick and Joanna Gleason, closed after only nine performances in 1991.

The box-office returns of the first *Thin Man* movie, though, kept alive Hollywood's appetite for Hammett material in the 30s. *Woman in the Dark*, Hammett's 1933 novella published by *Liberty* magazine, was turned into a mediocre 1934 film by RKO. Fay Wray, Ralph Bellamy, and Melvyn Douglas starred. A sturdy version of *The Glass Key* appeared in 1935. George Raft, Claire Dodd, and Edward Arnold starred. *MR. DYNAMITE*, a 1935 Universal film starring Edmund Lowe and Jean Dixon, was based on Hammett's story "On the Make."

It was all building to something as close to perfect as Hollywood gets—Huston's *THE MALTESE FALCON*. It took three times, but Hollywood finally got it right.

Making his directorial debut, Huston realized that there was an ideal screenplay lurking in Hammett's book. If he didn't try to improve on the original, the third time would be the charm.

"The previous screenplays had been products of writers who sought to put their own stamp on the story by writing new, uncalled-for scenes," Huston said.

George Raft was offered the role of Sam Spade. He turned it down because he didn't want to work with a first-time director. So Huston was able to use his first choice for the role, Humphrey Bogart. Again and again, the director struck gold in the casting department: Mary Astor as Brigid O'Shaughnessy, Peter Lorre as Joel Cairo, Sydney Greenstreet as Casper Gutman, Elsha Cook, Jr., as Wilmer Cook, Lee Patrick as ever-faithful Effie Perrine.

"We were an unusually close company," Astor said of the filming. "Players usually like to get away from each other at lunch time, but we would all go together across to the Lakeside Golf Club, where a big table was set on the patio for us."

If *THE THIN MAN* and *THE MALTESE FALCON* are the best movies made from Hammett's books, the reason may be because they are the most faithful (with allowances for a line or scene sacrificed to the Hollywood Production Code).

It's "next to impossible" for anyone who has seen Huston's *FALCON* not to go back to the novel "without hearing the voices of Bogart and the others delivering the lines," Dooley maintains in his book. "The astonishing thing is how vividly—and distinctively—those characters are already there in Hammett's prose."

In 1942, Paramount released a second and better version of *THE GLASS KEY*. Alan Ladd played Beaumont, the loyal friend of political boss Paul Madvig (Brian Donlevy). Slinky Veronica Lake and brutish William Bendix added to the atmosphere. A year later, Warner Bros. released *WATCH ON THE RHINE*, Hammett's adaptation of Hellman's play. The 1943 picture won an Oscar for Paul Lukas.

Hammett also was all over the radio in the 40s. In addition to *THE THIN MAN*, there were two other radio series starring Hammett detectives: *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE* (See *Scarlet Street* #13) with Howard Duff (1946–51) and *THE FAT MAN* (1946–50) with J. Scott Smart as Brad Runyon (a character with elements of both the Op and Casper Gutman). Smart unsuccessfully tried to take his character to movies. Universal's *THE FAT MAN* (1951), though a flop, provided early film roles for Rock Hudson and singer Julie London.

"*THE FAT MAN* wasn't a bad radio series," said William Link, co-creator of *COLUMBO* and *MURDER, SHE WROTE*. "It just wasn't up to *SAM SPADE*, which was very innovative and clever. But I still remember the opening." And he starts to hum the tuba music and rattle off the announcer's introduction: "There he goes—across the street—into the drugstore. Steps on the scale. Height: six feet. Weight: 290 pounds. Fortune: Danger! Whooooo is it? The Fat Man!"

Between 1936 and 1950, there were no less than 14

radio productions of Hammett stories on such programs as *LUX RADIO THEATER*, *SUSPENSE*, and *MOLLE MYSTERY THEATRE*. Still, the sad truth was that Hammett had stopped writing. He didn't need to write. The checks kept pouring in from Hollywood.

Ann Clark, an artist living in Greenwich Village when she met Hammett in 1946, paints a picture of the mystery writer in these flush times: "I met Hammett through my friend Paul Monash [the writer and later TV producer of such series as *PEYTON PLACE*]. Paul asked me if he could bring Hammett by for dinner at my little apartment. I was 23. Hammett was 52. He was stunning. His white hair was clipped short. His skin was clear pink. He was immaculately groomed and elegantly dressed. He was smooth. He belonged in *Vogue*. He was smooth and graceful and elegant."

"But, looking back on it, I think he'd been drinking. It was hard to tell with Hammett because he never slurred his words. Paul and Hammett got into a very nasty argument, and, when dinner was over, they went out to a bar. A couple of days later, he asked me out to





In the 70s and early 80s, Dashiell Hammetts turned up in Spades. LEFT to RIGHT: Frederic Forrest in 1983's *HAMMETT*, Jason Robards as Hammett (with Jane Fonda as Lillian Hellman) in 1977's *JULIA*, and James Coburn as the Hammettesque Hamilton Nash in 1978's *THE DAIN CURSE*.

dinner. He was a completely different man. He was polite and pleasant. That's how you'd know if he had been drinking. He was charming, old fashioned, and gentlemanly when he was sober. He was nasty, insulting, and sneering when he was drinking. As his drinking increased, so did his nasty streak. Yet he was always nice to me."

There were several dinner dates. "He never mentioned Lillian Hellman," Clark said. "Hammett wasn't writing at the time. He was drinking. The last time I saw him, he was very drunk and abusive to the people we encountered. He called a few weeks later to ask me to dinner, but I said no. I never saw him again."

The drinking stopped in the late 40s. He promised a doctor he would stop. His word was important. He always tried to keep it.

The money stopped in the early 50s when the Communist witch-hunts closed in on Hammett. Refusing to name names for the United States District Court in New York City, the mystery writer was sentenced to six months in prison.

But the writing itself had stopped in the mid-30s. In a 1957 interview, Hammett said he had "stopped writing because I found I was repeating myself. It is the beginning of the end when you discover you have style." He added that "the thing that ruined me was the writing of the last third of *The Glass Key* in one sitting of 30 hours . . . Ever since then I have told myself: 'I could do it again if I had to.' And, of course, I couldn't."

The visitor to Hammett's cramped cottage noticed three dusty typewriters on a table. "I keep them to remind myself I was once a writer," Hammett explained.

Hellman believed that, when Hammett wanted to start a new literary life, he "was just too ill to care, too worn out to listen to plans or read contracts." In their biographies of Hammett, both Richard Layman and Julian Symons blame the Hollywood high life—liquor, women, parties, money, the lure of celebrity—for ruining Hammett as a writer. "The hard-boiled novelist grew soft," says Layman in *Shadow Man: The Life of Dashiell Hammett* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981).

It was a terrible yet mutually profitable bargain. Hollywood embraced Dashiell Hammett. He allowed himself to be embraced. Hollywood threw money at Dashiell Hammett. He held out his hands. Hollywood gave Dashiell Hammett the good life. He let that good life keep him from the typewriter. Hollywood grabbed everything Hammett wrote. He grabbed the money and wrote almost nothing during his Hollywood tenure.

On a small scale, it would seem that Hammett got the best of the relationship. Hollywood, after all, got very little in return for the mountains of studio money that subsidized Hammett's high style. Hammett wins. Hollywood loses.

On the scale of posterity, though, Hollywood wins. The movie industry was the beneficiary of a wealth of influential material. Hollywood was indeed richer for having mined this rich source of originality. Yes, Hollywood is artistically richer for having known Hammett the writer, but Hammett, while financially richer, is artistically poorer for having known Hollywood.

The sad fact is that the beginning of Hammett's Hollywood years marks the beginning of the end of the writer. The triumph of Dashiell Hammett's work is reflected in the best Hollywood adaptations of his books. The tragedy of Dashiell Hammett's career is embodied in the years he spent in Hollywood.

But the influence—that profound influence—lived on after his death on January 10, 1961. Critic John Crosby wrote in the *New York Herald Tribune* that television was crowded with "imitations of imitation Sam Spade." In her biography, *Dashiell Hammett: A Life* (Random House, 1983), Diane Johnson reminds us that we take the hard-boiled hero so much for granted that "we have nearly lost sight of the extent to which he was Hammett's creation."

Hammett, though, emerged again in our consciousness, this time as a hero—and Hollywood had a lot to do with the process. In 1975, Joe Gores, himself a detective-

Continued on page 111

HOLLYWOOD BABBLE ON



STARS DISH THE DIRT... ABOUT OTHER STARS!

Hollywood Babble On

Stars Gossip About Other Stars

Compiled and edited by Boze Hadleigh



"Cheetah bit whenever he could. The apes were all homosexuals, eager to wrap their paws around Johnny Weismuller's thighs. They were jealous of me, and I loathed them."

—Maureen ("Jane") O'Sullivan

Gossip can often be spicy. But gossip spread by stars, about other stars, is downright nasty! **Hollywood Babble On** is the first book in which every quote has been uttered by one star about another star.

Bela Lugosi is no gentleman. We made several pictures together, and he never liked me, I assume because I'm English and have a better command of the language and receive better offers...He used to admit that he beats his wives and once even bragged about it. I was appalled and made it known. He laughed that demonic cackle of his and shrugged, "Ab, the English!"

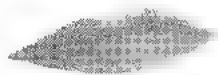
—Boris Karloff

Mr. Karloff—always so dignified...In "Frankenstein" he spoke no lines. That is why when they offered it to me, I said, "No. I am a trained actor. I am trained to speak. If I do not speak lines, it is not acting." Then Mr. Karloff accepted the part of the monster.

—Bela Lugosi

Boris Karloff was a good actor because he was a kindly man and in no way scary. Bela Lugosi was not a good actor because he was not a pleasant man and he was plenty scary, as is!

—Sal Mineo



In **Hollywood Babble On**, Boze Hadleigh, author of *The Lavender Screen* and *Hispanic Hollywood*, has selected the juiciest remarks made by performers and directors and writers about other performers directors and writers.

The comments are deliciously funny even when the stings are the sharpest. **Hollywood Babble On** is the perfect book for movie fans and gossip lovers alike.



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Better Holmes and Watson

The Granada Series Reviewed

THE ABBEY GRANGE
Adaptation: Trevor Bowen
Direction: Peter Hammond

Mr. Sherlock Holmes (Jeremy Brett) begins the adventure of *THE ABBEY GRANGE* by deprecating the literary skills of his good friend and companion, Dr. John H. Watson (Edward Hardwicke).

"Your fatal habit of looking at everything from the point of view of a story instead of a scientific exercise has ruined what might have been an instructive and even classical series of demonstrations," chides the Great Detective.

Later, investigating a murder case, Holmes is impressed by the mental agility of Mr. Viviani (Nicolas Chagrin), manager of the shipping office of the Adelaide-Southampton line:

"Mr. Viviani, your perspicacity astonishes me!"

"I assure you," smiles Viviani, "it is only through study of the good doctor's masterly exposition of your work that I now have any small capacity to reason."

"Really," murmurs Holmes. "You amaze me! Watson, are you taking notes?"

Point for Dr. Watson.

Coming after the astonishing events of *THE EMPTY HOUSE*, not the least of which was the return from the dead of the world's first consulting detective, *THE ABBEY GRANGE* (originally published in 1904 and collected in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*) might have been expected to be something of a letdown. The case has its points, but it contains nothing so extraordinary as Colonel Sebastian Moran's air gun or the sight of Mrs. Hudson crawling about the floor as she repositions a bust of her famous lodger.

Sir Eustace Brackenstall (played by Conrad Phillips, who represented Scotland Yard in 1960's *CIRCUS OF HORRORS*) has been brutally murdered. His wife, Lady Mary (Anne Louise Lambert) has been roughed up by the killers, who appear to have been the Lewisham gang, a trio of local villains consisting of Randall and his two sons. (Is it giving away too much to say that these baddies never actually show up in the story?) Lady Mary's faithful servant, Theresa Wright (Zulema Dene), corroborates her beloved mistress' testimony, and Inspector Hopkins (Paul Williamson) is inclined to believe them.

At first, Holmes is disappointed. To all appearances it is an open and shut case—that is, until the Master Sleuth



Jeremy Brett

uncovers a few telling clues, including a dog's gravestone, an unfrayed rope, three wine glasses, and a stationery log in a lake. Then, once again, "the game is afoot!"

Jeremy Brett actually speaks those famous words in this program, and charges them with a quiet intensity. Later, severely discomfited by Lady Mary's overly effusive appreciation of Holmes' detecting skills, Brett shows why he will always be considered one of the great portrayers of Sherlock Holmes.

THE ABBEY GRANGE is the first Granada episode directed by Peter Hammond, who makes a stylish job of it, and happily displays few of the baroque, reflection-obsessed excesses that mar some of his later work (which includes *THE MASTER BLACKMAILER*, *THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR*, and three of *THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES'* six episodes).

Alfred Hitchcock often claimed that he had cheated the audience in his 1950 film *STAGE FRIGHT* by showing a flashback that was a lie. (It is the killer who narrates the flashback, and, desperate to provide himself with an alibi, he lies about much of the action—which we, the audience, see dramatized on screen.) Helped immeasurably by Trevor Bowen's tight, clever script, Hammond manages to show just such a lying flashback in *THE ABBEY GRANGE* without once putting anything on screen that didn't actually occur. Like the entire program, it's a subtle but memorable achievement.

—Richard Valley

Theresa (Zulema Dene) attends to Lady Mary Brackenstall (Anne Louise Lambert), who has suffered grievous bodily harm in *THE ABBEY GRANGE*. Inspector Hopkins (Paul Williamson) has called in Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson (Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke) on the case. **NEXT PAGE:** Holmes and Watson discover the missing loot in a nearby pond. *THE ABBEY GRANGE* was the first show filmed with Edward Hardwicke as Watson.



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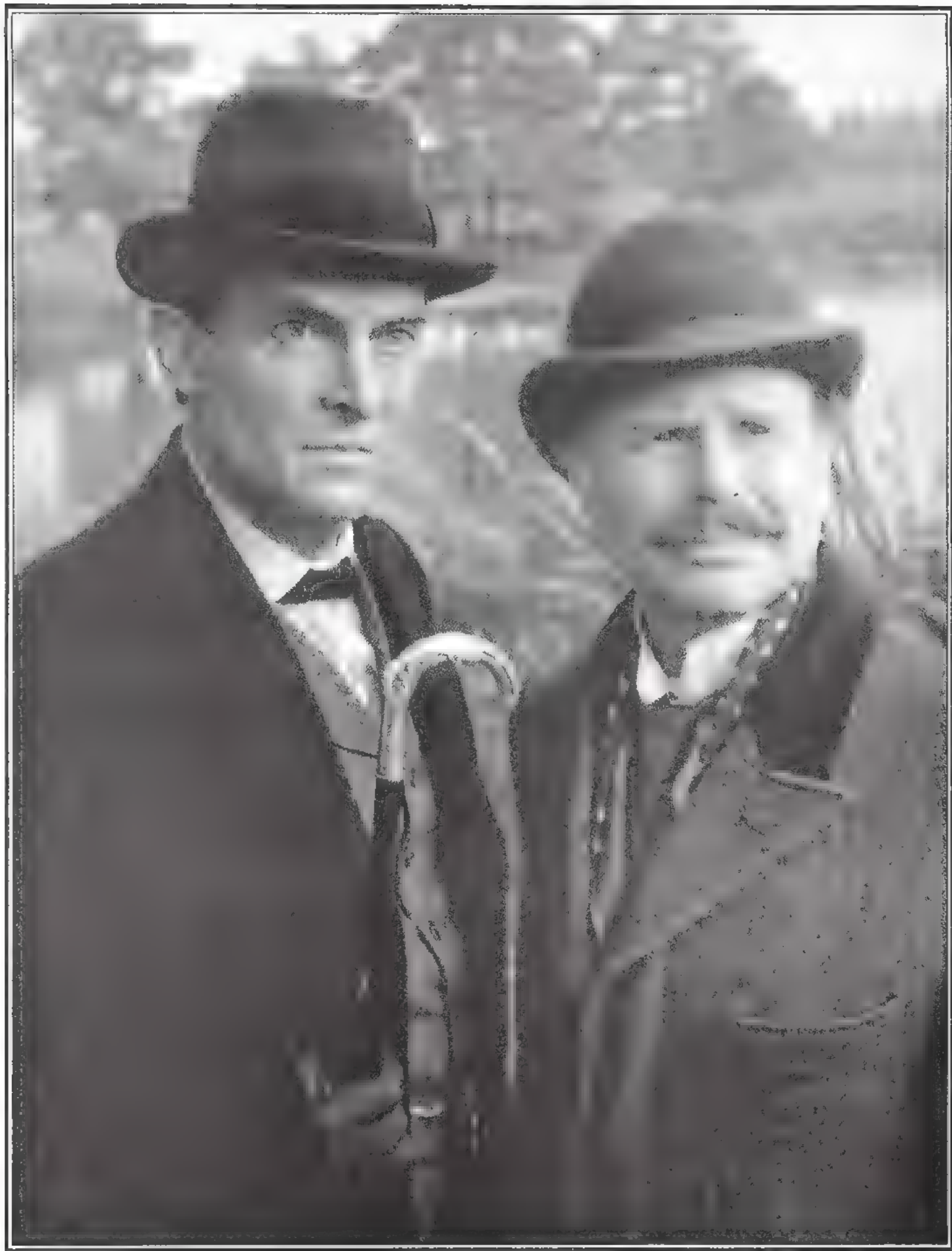
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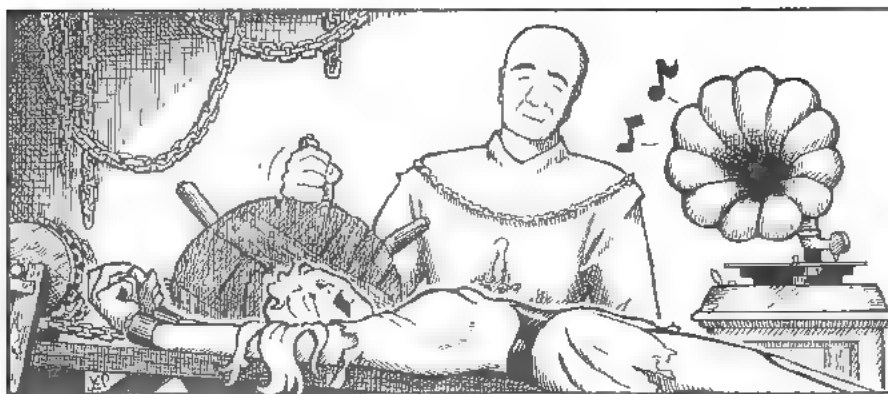
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Record Rack

by Ross Care

Suspense!: Bernard Herrmann

It's benignly ironic that Bernard Herrmann (1911-1975), one of the most resolutely non-commercial musicians ever to terrorize Hollywood, has become perhaps the most recorded (and adulated and imitated) film composer of the 80s and 90s. Many of his scores did not even generate original soundtrack albums when the films were first released. Herrmann never had a "greatest hit" (such as Raksin's "Laura" or North's "Unchained Melody") and his themes never appeared on 1950s mood music albums. Now, however, pieces from *NORTH BY NORTHWEST* and *CITIZEN KANE* seem as replicated on CD as Ravel's "Bolero" and Holst's "The Planets." Like Gustav Mahler's, Herrmann's time has indeed come.

My first experience of Herrmann's music was via a movie-theme album: Paul Weston's "Sound Stage: Hi-Fi Music from Hollywood" (Columbia CL 612). The title dates it from the square Hi-Fi 50s, but Weston's selections, alternating a few then-popular themes with *FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS* (1943), *DUEL IN THE SUN* (1946), and *INDISCRETION OF AN AMERICAN WIFE* (1953), were very far out (and tastefully arranged) for an album of the period. Remarkably, the album also featured Herrmann's "Jennie's Song" from David O. Selznick's rare 1948 mystery/fantasy *PORTRAIT OF JENNIE*. Herrmann was an emotional, lyrical, but not especially melodic or tune-oriented composer, and his theme provided odd company for such hits as Victor Young's "Love Letters" and Heinz Roemheld's "Ruby," two of the most recorded movie themes of their time. (Like *JENNIE*, Weston's album was partially a homage to Jennifer Jones, which accounts for the inclusion of the theme).

Herrmann was particularly vocal in his denunciation of the movie theme song. In 1973, he commented with characteristic vitriol, "I don't know why, today, a film has to cost \$4 million to push a record costing 70 cents."

Thus, the staunchly purist Herrmann firmly resisted the invasive movie-song syndrome of the era. I



Hitchcock and Herrmann

know of only one exception, some sheet music discovered in the bottomless depths of the Library of Congress' music collections in Washington: Apparently, some forgotten Paramount honcho managed to prod themes from *VERTIGO* into a popular song entitled "Madeleine," words by Larry Orenstein, and with the music adapted by Jeff Alexander. The lyrics laud the "strangely beguiling" Madeleine, whose eyes "leave you helpless and spellbound," so much so that you don't care "if you're Heaven or Hell-bound." The adaptation manages to condense Herrmann's expansive love music to the 32-bar/AABA structure of the standard pop song of the period, the

more ecstatic and Wagnerian of the themes providing the B (or release) section. It appears that Paramount was less than spellbound by this version, as they also commissioned the hit-writing team of Jay Livingston and Ray Evans, who wrote "Buttons and Bows," "Que Sera, Sera" (from *THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH*), and many other Hollywood successes, to create a number entitled "Vertigo," "inspired by the motion picture." (At a New York YMHA "Lyrics and Lyricists" program, I heard the team swear that they had been given a similar assignment with *THE MOLE PEOPLE*!) One can easily imagine the irascible Herrmann's reactions to both *VERTIGO* "tunes!"

But we digress. One hopes he might have felt more kindly toward Weston's sympathetic transcription of his ethereal *PORTRAIT OF JENNIE* theme. (It was Herrmann's only contribution to the film, the score of which was otherwise adapted by Dimitri Tiomkin from Debussy.) For me, as an "impressionable," movie-obsessed child of the 50s, the track cued an interest in a previously unfamiliar composer. Then along came Harryhausen's *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD* in 1958 (with its wonderful Colpix original soundtrack album), and Hitchcock's *NORTH BY NORTHWEST* (1959) and *PSYCHO* (1960), two landmark films in which (though no album was released from either) the music leapt from the screen and lodged permanently in recesses of your psyche that had never been touched in precisely that way before.

Actually, prior even to Weston's album, I grew up having a Herrmann theme ingrained in my consciousness every week: his vivid opening cue for one of the favorite radio shows of my childhood: *SUSPENSE!* When, years later, I discovered that it had been composed by Herrmann, it

made perfect sense: the hypnotic harp intro based on a repeated arpeggiated major-7th chord, the eerie chimes, the murky droning bass theme, not quite an actual melody but yet so chillingly evocative.... (In many ways this SUSPENSEI cue was a minimalist prototype for the VERTIGO "Prelude.") Herrmann started out in radio, scoring and conducting for many shows, including Orson (The Shadow) Welles' legendary Mercury Theatre, noted for its infamous WAR OF THE WORLDS broadcast. (It was Welles who brought Herrmann to Hollywood for CITIZEN KANE in 1941.)

Herrmann, Hitch, and Horrors

Herrmann's collaboration with Alfred Hitchcock has been documented both in film literature and on record and CD. It began in 1955 with the sardonic THE TROUBLE WITH HARRY, and ended acrimoniously when Hitch backed Universal's decision to drop Benny's score from TORN CURTAIN (1966) for an allegedly more commercial one by John Addison (after which Herrmann essentially left Hollywood for England.) The collaboration peaked with VERTIGO (1958), NORTH BY NORTHWEST, and PSYCHO, but includes THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH and THE WRONG MAN (both 1956), MARNIE (1964), and Herrmann's supervision of the electronically-manipulated bird sounds in THE BIRDS (1963), a film otherwise unscored. The great trilogy of Herrmann/Hitchcock scores have all been recorded in their entirety, VERTIGO represented by the Mercury original soundtrack, and

NxNW and PSYCHO by complete re-recordings; all three albums have been reissued on CD.

Which brings us to the plethora of current Herrmann CDs, two of which are devoted to Hitchcock scores. "Psycho: Great Hitchcock Movie Thrillers" (London 436 797-2, Time: 53:46) is for the most part a reissue of Herrmann's original 1968 London Hitchcock collection. Silva Screen's "Dial M For Murder" (SSD 1030, Time: 64:21) is all Hitchcock music but not all by Herrmann, and from Milan comes "Bernard Herrmann Film Scores" (73138 35643-2, Time: 69:44) conducted by Elmer Bernstein, on which some but not all of the tracks are from Hitchcock films. All include the NxNW "Main Title," the VERTIGO "Scene d'Amour," and PSYCHO excerpts, and the MARNIE "Prelude" as well. Sooo.... you pays your money, and you takes your choice.

Well, not exactly. "Psycho: Great Hitchcock Movie Thrillers" provides the chance to rediscover Herrmann's own re-recordings of these tracks. As conductor, the composer sometimes altered tempi on his recordings, usually slowing them down from the way they are heard in the films (a trait also evident on his fantasy-film albums), so Herrmann's own recordings do not always sound exactly like the original soundtracks. Aside from the complete PSYCHO, the excerpts here, subtitled "A Narrative for Orchestra," offer the longest (14:27) extract from this celebrated score, and London's famous Phase 4 analog sonics have a much closer, in-your-face sound than the other two fully-digital versions. (Phase 4 was a new

system of multi-channel recording introduced in 1964. With 20 separate tracks that could be mixed spatially and dynamically, it was a kind of high-tech Fantasound, the system introduced in Disney's FANTASIA in 1940.) Cloud Nine's recent (and excellent) MYSTERIOUS ISLAND original soundtrack uses a similar technique.

Not an especially subtle style of recording, Phase 4 nonetheless provided a precisely defined, almost "photo-realist" rendering of orchestral sound, e.g., the bullet-sharp xylophone and fat splashy low brass in the NORTH BY NORTHWEST "Prelude." (Bernstein uses the same alternating time-signatures Spanish meter in a WEST SIDE STORY number: 6/8, "I-like-to-be-in-A 3/4: MER-I-CA." The rest of Sondheim's lyrics can easily be recited to NxNW's fandango-like beat; easily, that is, if you have a great sense of rhythm.) Herrmann's own is probably the most dynamic version of this famous Main Title.

In addition to the "Scene D'Amore," with its deliberate allusions to Wagner's "Liebestod" ("Love Death!") from TRISTAN UND ISOLDE, this VERTIGO track also includes the stunning "Prelude and Nightmare," a real plus not included on the other albums (it is currently heard as the curtain rises on Broadway's AN INSPECTOR CALLS), and TROUBLE WITH HARRY and MARNIE suites. Filling out the disc is Stanley Black's syrupy "mood" version of Miklos Rozsa's SPELLBOUND (1945), and Hitchcock's TV theme: Charles Gounod's "Funeral March For A Marionette."

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Hitchcockian trip, from the first American films through his depressing late 60s decline. As mentioned, all the Herrmann tracks are duplicated elsewhere. Among the less familiar tracks is a seven-minute suite from *UNDER CAPRICORN* (1949), an appealingly Irish-flavored score, by Richard Addinsell, the British composer most famous for his "Warsaw Concerto" (composed for the 1941 British WWII film *DANGEROUS MOONLIGHT*). Silva also includes a *SPELLBOUND* concerto. The popular piano version of this one-movement work inevitably ended up with Addinsell's "Warsaw" on countless recordings of "light" music in the 40s and 50s, but Silva Screen's is a "concerto for orchestra" and the first recording of Rozsa's original synthesis arrangement in 40 years.

Also here (but by no means essential) are Jarre's *TOPAZ* (1969), Ron Goodwin's *FRENZY* (1972), and bits from Tiomkin's vulgar, overblown score for *DIAL M FOR MURDER* (1954). The reliable Franz Waxman is represented by *REBECCA* (1940) and *SUSPICION* (1941), both previously recorded. This Silva Screen release is a fascinating chronological overview

of Hitchcock music, and while the performances by the Prague Philharmonic under Paul Bateman are competent, they suffer from a certain "get on with it" quality, and don't always quite come up to the delirious excesses much of this music demands. An engrossing Hitchcock overview, nonetheless.

Last, but definitely not least, is Elmer Bernstein's Herrmann tribute on Milan. Bernstein is, of course, a composer who created some of the most original, lyrical, and (next to that master of aural erotica, Alex North) sexiest scores of the 50s and 60s: *DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS* (1957), *GOD'S LITTLE ACRE* (1958), and *WALK ON THE WILD SIDE* (1961), among many others (and not to forget *ROBOT MONSTER* and *CAT WOMEN OF THE MOON* from 1953). Bernstein recently adapted Herrmann's original score for Scorsese's remake of *CAPE FEAR* (1991), this "rediscovery" of one of film's all-time great composers suggesting that Hollywood has not yet become completely comatose. Obviously a Herrmann devotee, Bernstein also recorded Herrmann's rejected score for *TORN CURTAIN* for his own

Filmmusic Collection (FMC-10) in 1977. Warner Bros. Records (BSK 3185) released this recording in 1978, and parts of this score were reportedly also used in the new *CAPE FEAR*.

On "Bernard Herrmann Film Scores," Bernstein alternates standard tracks with some less-exposed choices, but his personal touch makes everything fresh, and the disc sometimes sound closer to the original film tracks than Herrmann's own recordings. The six-minute *PSYCHO* suite is especially expressive, notably the final cue (Norman and the fly!), which accentuates the link between *PSYCHO*'s "black and white" music and the string scores of Bela Bartok. His "Finale" especially evokes the mood of the opening fugue from Bartok's "Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta," a similarity I never really noticed before, though the abrasive rhythms and prodigious string special-effects in *PSYCHO* were always Bartokian. (If you like *PSYCHO*, you might easily get into the Bartok string quartets as well.)

Speaking of classical influences (of which there are many in Herrmann), Bernstein includes one non-

Herrmann work, British composer Arthur Benjamin's "Storm Clouds" cantata from both versions of *THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH*, reorchestrated by Herrmann for the 1956 remake: an imposing work in the stirring British (and Elgarian) choral/orchestra mode. For Anglophile Herrmann in an uncharacteristically French mode, refer to Bernstein's sensitive rendering of the "Book People" cue from *FAHR-ENHEIT 451* (1967), with very much the feel of Ravel's elegy to childhood, "La Jardin Féérique," the final movement of his "Mother Goose Suite." Indeed, one almost suspects that Truffaut may have tape-tracked the moving conclusion of this otherwise (deliberately) dispassionate Bradbury adaptation with the controlled but sublimely intense emotion of this Ravel piece.

An off-beat track is a suite from another Truffaut score, *THE BRIDE WORE BLACK* (1968), which, with its manic quoting of Mendelssohn's warhorse "Wedding March," may be the closest the relentlessly serious Herrmann ever came to camp. *THE WRONG MAN*'s "Main Title" also proves that, among all the things Herrmann was, he wasn't pop. This odd track is Herrmann's bizarre



Kim Novak and James Stewart starred in Alfred Hitchcock's *VERTIGO* (1958). Remember the hit tune by Bernard Herrmann?

conception of night-club music, and Nino Rota he's not! Most Hollywood composers could effortlessly slip back and forth between classical and pop/jazz modes, at times fluidly fusing the two. Herrmann was adamantly anti-pop, and it's next to impossible to imagine him swinging—*THE WRONG MAN* certainly doesn't—or rocking, which perhaps explains his resentment toward the pop trends of the 60s.

Ironically, Herrmann's last film assignment, Scorsese's 1976 urban horror-movie *TAXI DRIVER*, utilized a

jazz-influenced sound. The original soundtrack style was more contemporary (in the pop sense) than anything Herrmann had done previously, and it's not surprising that the Royal Philharmonic has trouble replicating the film's gritty, trippy feel. This very minor quibble aside, the Bernstein collection is top-notch, and includes a four-minute Herrmann interview from the early 70s, in which the maestro muses on the function of film music.

And the Herrmann hits just keep on coming. The first full-length recording of *NIGHT DIGGER*: "Scenario Macabre for Orchestra," conducted by Herrmann himself, was released on Label X (LXCD 12)

in May, too late for inclusion here, and midsummer will see the release of two Herrmann CDs from the Fox Classic series: *THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR* (1947), and *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH* (1959). Some of these will be covered in the next column, which will deal primarily with Herrmann's fantasy-film scores—Part II of a tale calculated to keep you in Suspense!

Ross Carr is a composer and author. His score for the play "This Is Not A Pipe Dream" was recently heard in Washington, D.C.

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Boy Meets Ape Man

The Swinging Career of Johnny Sheffield by Joe Collura

Johnny Sheffield was one of the most envied child actors of his generation. As Boy, the husky, tousled-haired youngster in the widely popular Tarzan movies of the late 30s and 40s, he got to do the kinds of things other kids only dream about. He lived in a tree house. Went swimming any time he felt like it. Walked with and sometimes rode exotic animals. And, last but not least, participated in stirring adventures alongside his "foster father" and closest friend, Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle, played by five-time Olympic swimming champion Johnny Weissmuller.

"On the set, if they needed Weissmuller, they'd call, 'Big John!'" remembers Sheffield, now 63. "If they needed me, they'd call, 'Little John!' And if they needed us both at the same time, they would shout out, 'Big and Little!' I didn't see John much away from the studio... but at work, I admired him very much. He always had a little joke, and, of course, when he was in the water, he moved like a motorboat. That impressed me more than anything."

Johnny Sheffield was born on April 11, 1931, in Pasadena, California. His natural father was English-born Reginald ("Reggie") Sheffield, who as a child actor himself appeared on Broadway in *THE MERRY*

Continued on page 76



Photo courtesy of the University of Minnesota



Ape Woman Meets Boy

The Exotic Lives of Acquanetta

Interview by
John Brunas
& Michael Brunas

There's a bright and bouncy little Harry Revel/Mack Gordon tune called "It's the Animal in Me," written for Ethel Merman to sing in a Tarzan parody in *WE'RE NOT DRESSING* (1934) and ultimately winding up in *THE BIG BROADCAST OF 1936*, which might better have suited that exotic vixen of the 1940s: Acquaneaeta!

After all, it was Acquaneaeta who played Paula Dupree, the gorilla turned temptress in *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN* (1943) and *JUNGLE WOMAN* (1944), the first two installments of a trio of Ape Woman films from that bastion of horror, Universal.

It was Acquaneaeta who challenged the Lord of the Jungle; his wife, Jane; and his boy, Boy, in *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN* (1946), raising a spotted ruckus on the back lot of RKO.

It was Acquaneaeta who pointed the way to the prehistoric denizens of a certain *LOST CONTINENT* (1951).

Acquanetta brought an otherworldly, inhuman presence to her movies that few who have witnessed them are likely to forget. Gorillas! Leopards! Dinosaurs! Why, the woman was her own zoo!

Scarlet Street is proud to present our exclusive interview with the woman once known as "The Venezuelan Volcano," the woman who really hailed from Wyoming and grew up in Pennsylvania—the inimitable Acquaneaeta!



LEFT: In the history of Universal horror movies, Paula Dupree (Acquanetta, pictured with John Carradine in 1943's *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN*) was the only female monster to have her own series. **RIGHT:** Paula returned in 1944's *JUNGLE WOMAN*, thanks to the mad doc played by J. Carrol Naish.

Scarlet Street: Aren't you really a Native American?

Acquanetta: My mother was, yes. I'm Arapaho. My father's grandmother was Cherokee, and his grandfather was the illegitimate son of the King of England.

SS: How did you become an actress?

A: I had first modelled for Harry Conover in New York. One night I was at the Stork Club; John Powers was there, and he saw me. I got a call: "The big man wants to see you." I said, "Who's that?" "John Powers." So I went to Mr. Powers, and he pulled a contract out a drawer in his desk, and pushed it across the desk to me and said, "Sign on the bottom line" which was kind of cute. So I signed, and he picked up his telephone and dialed a number, and he said, "Hi,

Harry. You know, you used to model for me. Okay, you left and became an agent, but you never learned how to sign people to contracts. I've got Acquanetta here, and I have her signature. Goodbye, Harry." (Laughs) That's the way I became a John Powers model!

SS: Had you wanted to be a model?

A: No, it wasn't something that I decided to do. I just happened to be in New York, looking in the window of a store on Fifth Avenue. A reporter saw my reflection, and spun me around and said, "Are you a model?" In those days, I had long hair, and his friend was looking for someone to model as a Hawaiian. I said, "Certainly! Of course, I'm a model." But I really wasn't; the only time I'd ever modeled was for Wonder Bread

with six other girls. Anyway, he gave me his card, and I went to Madison Avenue. Anyway, by the time I got there, his friend had already hired somebody else, but he told me to wait. He finished with the other lady and called his assistant, who looked like a gypsy—she was so colorfully dressed. He said, "Bring me some costumes." I spent the next four hours modeling in all different kinds of things. This was before I ever went with Harry Conover and John Powers, and he asked where to send the check. I looked at him blankly, and he said, "Harry Conover? Powers?" And I still looked blank. And he said, "Oh, you're a free-lancer!" And, by golly, he gave me \$100! That's \$25 an hour!

SS: A lot of money.

LEFT: Acquanetta is all set to go ape, much to the consternation of *JUNGLE WOMAN* costar Richard Davis. **RIGHT:** *DEAD MAN'S EYES* (1944) was an Inner Sanctum mystery starring Acquanetta with Lon Chaney, Jr.



A: I didn't make that in a week before as a waitress! (Laughs)

SS: You'd been waitressing?

A: I'd been waitressing in New York City. I started out at a little nutty house, where they serve little nutty sandwiches. People gave me tips, but, actually, they didn't pay much in salary. I was living at the YWCA.

SS: How did the acting come about?

A: By accident, also. I was on my way to Rio de Janeiro to perform at the Copacabana. I stopped in Hollywood and happened to be invited to the Mocambo, which was a place on Sunset Boulevard where all the stars and producers and directors went. There was Walter Wanger from Universal Studios, whom I had never met, and Mr. Louis B. Mayer, whom I had never met—I didn't even know who these people were! (Laughs) But they took note of me. The following day, I got calls—I was at the Beverly Hills Hotel—from these two studios. They took me out to Metro, and Metro did a test. From there, we went to Universal, where Dan Kelley was the head of casting. He was afraid that Metro would sign me as competition for Maria Montez, who was under contract to Universal, so they signed me right away. They wanted me for ARABIAN NIGHTS, but the lead went to Maria Montez.

SS: So Universal saw you as another Montez?

A: I was competition for Maria, but we were not really the same type. Maria was very fiery; she was a Cuban. I was very calm, a totally different personality.

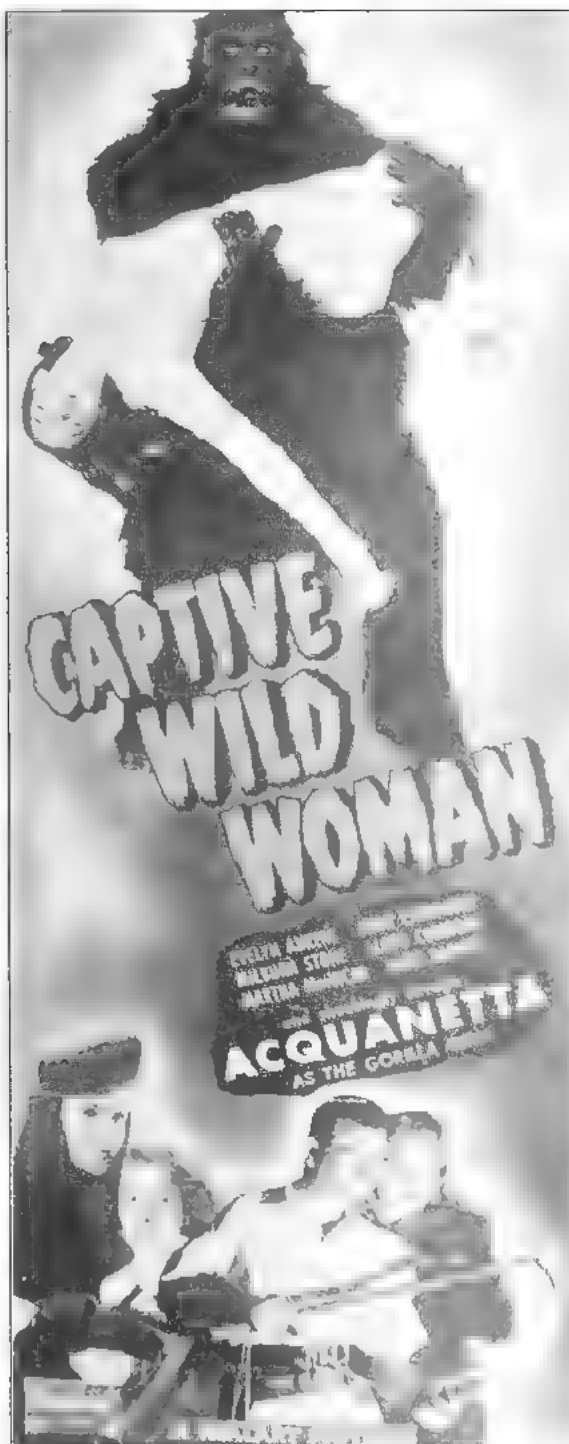
SS: But Universal publicized you as an exotic.

A: Well, actually, that started in New York. When I was in New York as a model, I met a fellow who was a stringer for Walter Winchell, and some of those other chaps. They said, "You're just an Indian girl from Wyoming, but you look Latin. Let's make you a Latin." We put our heads together, and they decided I was from Venezuela; I became "The Venezuelan Volcano!"

SS: In CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN, your billing was "introducing Acquanea-tta," but you'd already made some films.

A: I've been introduced four or five times! (Laughs) My first film was ARABIAN NIGHTS, and that was really by accident—because, when Universal found me, they wanted to

replace Maria Montez with Acquanea-tta. I was to be their Scheherazade. I would have been perfect for that role, because Scheherazade was a dark and sultry type of a female. Maria Montez didn't look the part,



but she did a good job in the role. Maria became very competitive with me; I think she was a little jealous.

SS: Were you ever friends?

A: Never. As a matter of fact, I was invited to a party at her home before I met her. She had heard about me; she had heard that Universal had

found me, and she actually asked me to leave the party—which I did. We never became friends. We became friendly to the degree that we spoke to each other. I've never met a person that I've been jealous of; jealousy is a negative. I felt sorry for her in those days, because it has to make people unhappy, it has to bring poison into your body. I believe that there are positives and negatives, and so I try to be a positive person in everything that I do. If I don't want to do it, I won't, but I'm not going to be negative to anyone. And I will help anyone that comes across my path.

SS: Many coworkers of Maria Montez have said that she treated them rudely.

A: Well, that happens. That happens to some people who have no sense of self worth. They achieve something in life, and immediately they take on a false, superior attitude. There's no one in this world who is superior to anyone else. There are some people who are luckier. There are some people who have no education. There are some people who have better memories—and I admire that, because I have a terrible memory! (Laughs) And there are some people who look different than other people. Some call them handsome, pretty, exotic—what have you. But every single person born into this world has something positive about them. So, I don't believe in people feeling superior.

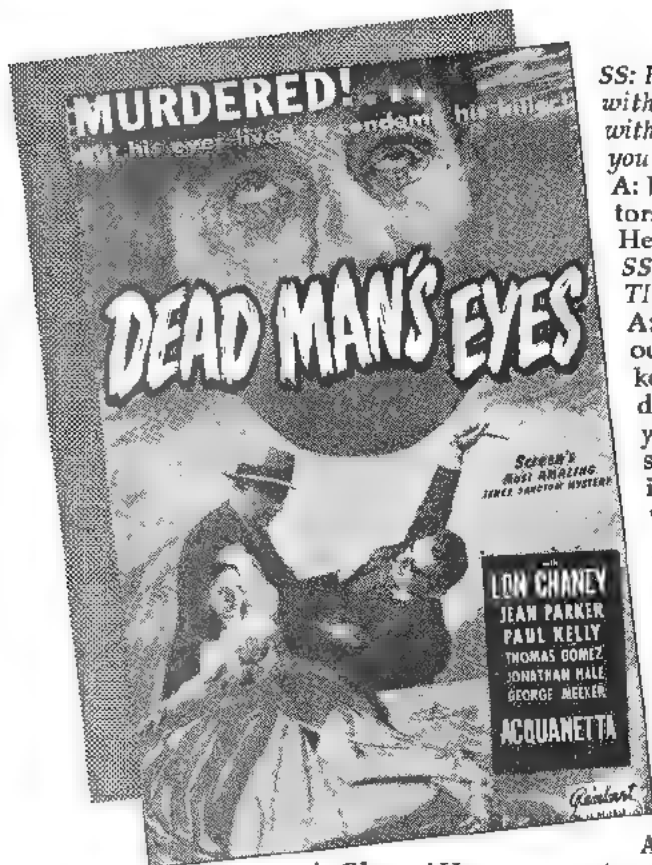
SS: Which Maria Montez did.

A: They called me the Venezuelan Volcano, but Maria was really eruptive. When she'd walk into a room, she would sort of take over. She would move around with a sense of tremendous importance. "Here I am!" I don't knock that; after all, that was her personality. She was really the fiery one!

SS: What was it like to walk on the set for the first day of filming, not knowing anyone?

A: Sometimes, they announce you—but I'm the kind of person who introduces herself. I simply say, "Hello, I'm Acquanea-tta." Most people wait to be introduced. I'll put out my hand to some, and to some I won't. You can tell by a look on the face. Some people are a little stand-offish.

SS: CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN was directed by Edward Dmytryk...



A: Oh, yes! He was a great director! I liked him; we became friends. I think Dan Kelly made the choice to cast me in *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN*. I had the exotic look, and they found that they could put me into almost any role, and I could easily assume that character and personality. For instance, I'm the only woman to ever play the role of a gorilla; I felt it, you know? It was fun to do those things. I was like a child, play acting and dressing up.

SS: Did Dmytryk give you much direction on the film?

A: Yes, he did assist me, and coach me, and then we became friends. We would sometimes just have lunch or dinner together; he was like a big brother. Actually, he never achieved his potential. He could have been great, but no one ever gave him the opportunity to display it.

SS: Well, he was blacklisted. He was one of the Hollywood Ten.

A: The war, the blacklist—there were a lot of strange things going on. You really couldn't take sides; you had to just stay out of it. I was invited to all kinds of meetings, which I did not attend. It was a dark, dark period in Hollywood.

John Brunas and Michael Brunas are the authors (with Tom Weaver) of *Universal Horrors* (McFarland, 1990), and longtime contributors to such genre magazines as *Midnight Marquee* and *Scarlet Street*.

SS: How would you compare working with Edward Dmytryk to working with Reginald Le Borg, who directed you in *JUNGLE WOMAN*?

A: Both of them were good directors, but Dmytryk—he excelled. He had the talent.

SS: You had no dialogue in *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN*.

A: They wanted me to act it out—because, you see, a monkey really doesn't talk. It's very difficult to play a role where you don't speak, because speech has nuances. Without it, you have to make up stuff with your body, movement with your eyes, with your face your vibes, really.

SS: How long did it take to put on the makeup?

A: A couple of hours.

SS: Any memories of Jack Pierce, the makeup artist?

A: Oh, he was great! What a nice man!

SS: Really? A lot of actors simply hated him.

A: People have both public and private roles. My dad, for instance, was a handsome man. To the public, he was a gentleman, quiet and all of that—but he was somewhat abusive to his family. Many people take on more than two roles; they take on five or six different personalities: One at the place of employment, one with their mistress—because a lot of men cheat—and another with their wife, and so on. I don't know; I'm the same with everyone. What you see is what you get. (Laughs) Only through acting did I ever portray another personality.

SS: Would you like to say anything about your *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN* costar, John Carradine?

A: Well, only that he was an actor 24 hours a day! (Laughs) I think Johnny acted in his sleep. We'd see him on the street with his cane, and his hat pulled down over his eyes, and when we spoke to him he'd immediately go into his role!

SS: Did he take himself very seriously?

A: Oh, did he ever! I don't ever remember him telling a joke!

SS: Another costar in *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN* was Evelyn Ankers....

A: We really didn't get to know each other very intimately—close, like a lot of girls who become buddies in school. We were friendly; I liked her. She was not a phony or a snob.

SS: Was *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN* a big hit?

A: All of my films were instant hits! It's amazing! They have pictures of

people standing in lines a couple of blocks long and around the corner. From the time that I was in New York, I grabbed headlines. Walter Winchell saw me one night and boom! I was in Winchell's column. Then William Randolph Hearst met me. He was fascinated with royalty, and my father, as I said, was an illegitimate direct descendant of the King of England.

SS: That is amazing!

A: Because he was fascinated with royalty, Hearst helped my career.

SS: Tell us about making *DEAD MAN'S EYES*.

A: Well, *DEAD MAN'S EYES* was a bread and butter picture. In those days, a B picture was called a bread and butter picture. When you made an A picture, you didn't make any money; the studios spent too much on them. But B movies always made money. *ARABIAN NIGHTS* certainly did, because of the hype in *Life*. In fact, I was in Hollywood less than six months, and I had three pages in *Life*. They had me scheduled for the cover, but it didn't turn out. Had I been on the cover, I wouldn't be here today. I would be in Hollywood; my whole life would have been different.

SS: You got along very well with Lon Chaney, didn't you?

A: Oh, yes—I got along with everyone. SS: *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN* was made by RKO....

A: That was after I left Universal. I had thought at the time, "Well, I've had a career," but a director, Kurt Neumann, decided that he wanted me for the role. He got hold of an agent, and the agent got hold of me—and that's how I got the role!

SS: Did you enjoy working with Johnny Weissmuller?

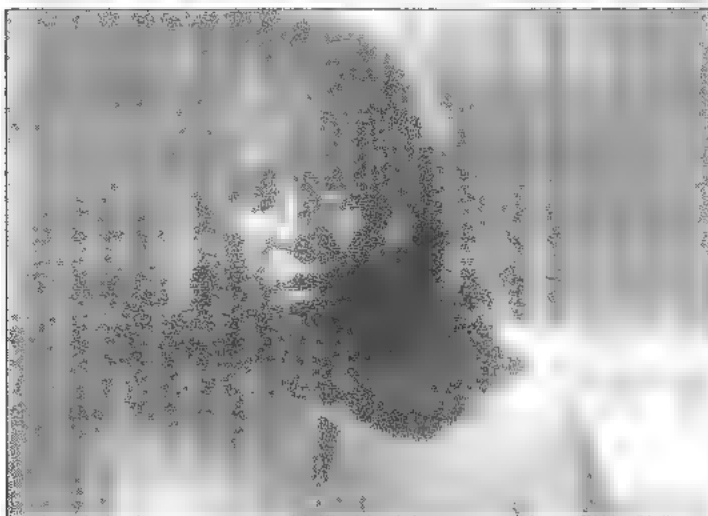
A: Oh, Johnny was great. Just beautiful. People used to say he drank a lot, but I never saw him do it.

SS: At that point, he had played Tarzan for 15 years. Did you detect any weariness on his part?

A: No, no, no—he was great. But I think that was one of his last Tarzan films. He decided he wanted to play Jungle Jim, and I was asked to work with him. I turned it down; it would have changed my life.

SS: Do you have any memories of working with Tommy Cook and Edgar Barrier on *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN*?

A: Well, I remember Tommy very well. He was playing tricks on the set all the time. Yes, he was a nice young chap. Edgar Barrier, he was nice. There's nothing particularly outstanding that I remember about



The mysterious Paula Dupree (Acquanetta) turns back into a gorilla in **CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN** (1943), thanks to the special-effects wizardry of Universal's John P. Fulton.

him; he just did his role and joked a lot. It was a happy set, you know? We had fun. Sometimes, you're working on a film and everybody is very distant—like on *ARABIAN NIGHTS*, with that small role I had. Even the girls in the water scene kind of stayed to themselves, you know? They didn't join in on the fun.

SS: Who were the actors—or actresses—who most impressed you?

A: J. Carrol Naish was one of the nicest. It's a simple word, "nice," but it means a lot. He was one of the nicest persons I've ever met in my entire life. He was a gentleman, always, and he was very bright. He understood acting. He never achieved his

full potential. He should have been a star. He gave me acting points, and, as I say, he was a gentleman—because, in those days, all a man in Hollywood would have to do is meet a woman and bang! he would come on to her. It was so common. I resent-

Continued on page 107



JOHNNY SHEFFIELD

Continued from page 70

WIVES OF WINDSOR (1916) and THE BETROTHAL (1918), and who starred in the 1923 silent-film version of Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* before becoming a Hollywood-based supporting player in such motion pictures as OF HUMAN BONDAGE (1934), ANOTHER DAWN (1937), THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD (1938), and SUSPICION (1941).

Johnny's mother, Louise Sheffield, was a playwright, book reviewer, and lecturer. Further back in the ancestral line are such notables as the American statesman and scientist Benjamin Franklin, as well as John Sheffield, an English poet and political leader who sponsored the building of Buckingham Palace.

Contrary to his later image, Johnny was considered a frail child until he was more than three years old. Weighing only four pounds at birth and confined to an incubator for weeks, he didn't truly begin his physical metamorphosis until his father put him on a strict regimen of exercise and nourishing food. In two years, the boy was as sound and hearty as other youngsters his age.

In 1938, at seven, Johnny received his first significant professional role: Pud in the stage hit ON BORROWED TIME, a comedy/fantasy about an old man (played by Dudley Digges) and his grandson who chase Death up a tree and, by means of a special charm, keep him there. It was one of the longest children's parts heretofore written for a legitimate play, and, after replacing Peter Holden on Broadway, Johnny acted in the original road-company version that trouped across the country.

"Parents tend to pass on to their offspring the things they know best," suggests Sheffield. "My father was an actor, so he taught me about acting. Had he been a plumber or a carpenter, I might well have gone into one of those professions."

Like most actors, Johnny's father followed the show-business trade papers looking for potential job opportunities. One day, he spotted an advertisement in *The Hollywood Reporter* that began: "Do you have a Tarzan in your backyard?" Reading further, he learned that Metro Goldwyn Mayer, the biggest film company in Hollywood, was casting a new character for its ongoing Tarzan se-

ries starring Johnny Weissmuller. Needed was a young male to play the ape-man's scion.

Mr. Sheffield believed that his child, who now displayed a natural flair for athletics, was perfect for the jungle-boy role. But then, a lot of other parents felt the same way about their kids. Casting personnel at MGM interviewed some 300 applicants, a large portion of whom were afterwards given camera tests. According to Johnny, he was not that different from a number of other children. Luckily, however, he had some acting experience, and, even more important, Weissmuller liked him from the start.

"Johnny Weissmuller was like a father to me," remarks Sheffield. "He was a gentleman who looked out for my interests. As far as getting the role of Boy, he personally chose me . . . even though I couldn't swim at the time. He volunteered to take me down to the Hollywood Athletic Club and, once in the pool, he swam to the deep end and started treading water with one knee up. He told me to paddle towards him. He caught me as I began to sink and raised me up so that my foot rested on his leg—it felt like a concrete step—and I was completely unafraid. 'You'll be all right,' he said. From there, he taught me to swim, and I got the part."

Johnny made his film debut in the aptly-titled TARZAN FINDS A SON! (1939). To get around the touchy issue of whether or not he was born to Tarzan and mate Jane out of wedlock (incidentally, the couple were married by a minister in one of the early Edgar Rice Burroughs books, but never legally joined on the screen), it was decided by the MGM scenario staff that Boy's "real" parents (played by Laraine Day and Morton Lowry) would be killed off in a plane crash.

Much of the location work for TARZAN FINDS A SON! was done at Silver Springs, Florida, because the clear lakes there were excellent for filming underwater sequences. The three previous Weissmuller Tarzan movies had been restricted to areas in and around Hollywood, mostly on the MGM back lot, where a stage was constructed to house the animals.

"MGM had a large outdoor stage—a zoo, really—that we dubbed lot three-and-a-half," recalls Sheffield. "Part of my job was to report to work several weeks before we started a Tarzan picture so as to reacquaint myself with the animals, and they with me. I remember I would lead a parade around the lot, riding an elephant. Two chimps, each aboard other elephants, followed, while

Joe Collura has contributed articles to Films in Review, Classic Images, Favorite Westerns, and Cliffhanger.



LEFT to RIGHT: Portrait of the artist as a young Boy, in *TARZAN FINDS A SON!* (1939), hitting the Big City with Maureen O'Sullivan and Johnny Weissmuller in *TARZAN'S NEW YORK ADVENTURE* (1942), and enjoying a lazy jungle day with Lita Baron in *BOMBA ON PANTHER ISLAND* (1949).

Leo, the company's lion mascot, walked freely with a third chimp by his side.

"One time, Leo decided he was going to do a little exploring, so he climbed up on the lighting platform that ran around the perimeter of the stage and was higher than the outside studio wall, which backed up against a residential street. A neighbor lady, unfortunately, just happened to be hanging her laundry that day. When she looked up and saw this lion above her, she nearly had a stroke!"

As busy as Johnny was, he did not escape going to school. When he was working at MGM, he attended classes in the mornings (taught by Mary McDonald right on the studio premises), along with other child actors under contract, including Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland. But work was work, and it usually took priority.

Twice a day, he spent time with the animals. And though chimpanzees, like the famed Cheetah (who in the Tarzan series provided comic relief and often went for help when humans were in tight spots), got a bad reputation for biting and being generally uncooperative, Johnny feels that they were no more difficult than some actors.

"There were a number of Cheetahs," relates Sheffield. "Jackie, I liked the most. He was one of our Congo chimps. Later on, we used India chimps, which were more docile but in my opinion not quite as smart. In *TARZAN'S NEW YORK ADVENTURE*, Jackie was used in the scene where Cheetah is seen putting on lip rouge and powder—a very funny scene that went well the first couple of takes. But directors being who they are and always wanting more, [they] kept shooting the scene again and again, until Jackie got mad and finally ran off.... As long as the animals were treated properly, there were no problems. But when they were pushed, it started getting dangerous. I'll never forget what a trainer told me when I started working with the lions: 'Remember, John, big cats like these may tolerate you, but that's all....'"

Edgar Rice Burroughs, who created Tarzan, was never directly involved in the production of the MGM Tarzan films, and it is said that he could never understand why the studio did not more closely follow his stories, wherein the central figure was not a monosyllabic ape-man, but a self-educated, titled Englishman turned noble savage. Johnny met Burroughs only once at the latter's San Fernando Valley estate, around which the present-day town of Tarzana took root and sprouted.

"I don't know what Burroughs thought of the Boy character," ponders Sheffield. "I assume the studio received the okay for it, and he had to be getting paid."

Something that was carried over to films from the Burroughs books was the notion that Tarzan could communicate with his animal friends through a common language, an extension of which is the now-legendary jungle yell, "aaaah-eee-aaah!" Used in a variety of situations—but mostly as a warning of danger or a call to arms—it became the ape-man's yodelling signature tune and was passed on to his family.

Under the supervision of William Nycamp, MGM sound technicians reportedly employed a series of disparate noises (a camel's bleat, the pluck of a violin string, a hyena's wowl played backwards, a soprano's high C) to achieve a result that was unique, but still within the range of human ability to imitate.

"There are a lot of stories on how the Tarzan yell originated," says Sheffield, "and I don't know for sure how many are true. I do know that my part in the process was fairly simple. I came out onto this small sound stage where a man sat at a Steinway piano. He hit a note and I matched it with my voice. You see, the studio had a preconceived idea of the sound they wanted, but it needed the human factor. Johnny Weissmuller eventually could do his own yell—which I thought sounded better than the fabricated version—and I got to where I could do mine."



" I'll never forget what a trainer told me : 'Remember, John, big cats like these may tolerate you, but that's all ' "

Jane had a screen yell, too. But Maureen O'Sullivan, who played the character in six Tarzan films altogether, reserved most of her shouting for the studio front office. She was never truly comfortable in the role and had tried to make her permanent exit from the series as early as the fourth entry. (TARZAN FINDS A SON! was originally going to be titled TARZAN IN EXILE and serve as Jane's swan song.) Fan protests persuaded MGM to rethink its position. The fair, dark-haired O'Sullivan was in many ways the perfect antithesis of her cinema spouse (as gentle as he was forceful, as cultured as he was rudimentary), and it was hard for people to let her go.

"I have very fond memories of Maureen O'Sullivan," reflects Sheffield. "She was a wonderful gal—still is. I was just writing a note to her—it's her birthday tomorrow [May 17]—and I was thinking about a scene she helped me with in TARZAN FINDS A SON! I didn't understand a lot of the things I did when I was young, or appreciate them, until years later. In the picture, Jane goes against Tarzan and leads a safari someplace where she shouldn't. As a consequence, the party, including her and me, is captured and threatened to be executed. Well, Jane and I are standing in this shack that has an opening just big enough for me to squeeze through and run for help. Only there are terrible-looking spiders and armed natives and God-knows-what-all I have to pass. So she looks me in the eyes and says quite convincingly—and you must remember, even though I knew beforehand that the spiders were phony and I wasn't going to die, as a seven-year-old kid, you get very wrapped up in what's happening, to the point where it seems like a real-life situation—anyway, Jane says, 'Boy, just keep going and don't look back.' And I took to heart her command. So in my note, I wrote: 'Hi, Mom. Happy Birthday. I'll never forget the scene where you told me not to look back . . . ' "

Unlike Johnny Weissmuller, O'Sullivan appeared in a variety of films while she was doing the Tarzan movies. Johnny Sheffield, too, worked sans loincloth in pictures apart from the Tarzans. He had the title role in RKO's LITTLE ORVIE (1940), as well as supporting parts in BABES IN ARMS (1939), LUCKY CISCO KID (1940), KNUTE ROCKNE—ALL AMERICAN (1940), MILLION DOLLAR BABY (1941), and ADVENTURE (1945).

All told, Johnny made three MGM Tarzan films: TARZAN FINDS A SON!, TARZAN'S SECRET TREASURE (1941), and TARZAN'S NEW YORK ADVENTURE, his favorite. After that, he moved with Weissmuller to RKO, where he acted in five Tarzans for producer Sol Lesser: TARZAN TRIUMPHS and TARZAN'S DESERT MYSTERY (both 1943), TARZAN AND THE AMAZONS (1945), TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN (1946), and TARZAN AND THE HUNTRESS (1947).

The Jane character, who had been absent for two entries (O'Sullivan departed the series following TARZAN'S NEW YORK ADVENTURE), was brought back for TARZAN AND THE AMAZONS. She was portrayed by blonde, statuesque Brenda Joyce, leading lady to both Weissmuller and his successor, Lex Barker, in five Tarzan movies. Johnny Sheffield, quite young when Maureen O'Sullivan played his mother, became a teenager during the period when Brenda Joyce essayed the role.

"Brenda Joyce was a lovely lady," asserts Sheffield. "Because of her, I know almost exactly the time in my life when I started to appreciate the physical attributes of the opposite sex. We were going up to our tree house, Tarzan and I trailing Jane. And I became suddenly entranced by the way she moved. Johnny Weissmuller, catching me in a stare, tapped my shoulder. 'They're pretty nice, aren't they?' he said.

Late in 1948, Walter Mirisch (who joined Monogram studios after World War Two as a producer of low-budget film fare and later advanced to more prestigious projects, such as 1960's THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, 1961's WEST SIDE STORY and 1967's IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT) phoned Johnny to ask him if he would be interested in doing another tropical adventure series. Mirisch had acquired the rights to an action character named Bomba (based on Ray Rockwell's childrens' books, Bomba, like Boy, grew up in the jungle) and thought Sheffield was ideally suited for the part.

Johnny accepted the offer, and over the next seven years starred in 12 movies whose titles closely identify their plots: BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY and BOMBA ON PANTHER ISLAND (both 1949), THE LOST VOLCANO and BOMBA AND THE HIDDEN CITY (both 1950), THE LION HUNTERS and BOMBA AND THE ELEPHANT STAMPEDE (both 1951), AFRICAN TREASURE and BOMBA AND THE JUNGLE GIRL (both 1952), SAFARI DRUMS (1953), THE GOLDEN IDOL and KILLER LEOPARD (both 1954), and LORD OF THE JUNGLE (1955).

Allied Artists, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Monogram, released the Bomba films. Veteran filmmaker Ford Beebe (who had a reputation for speed and resourcefulness) directed all of the pictures as well as contributing to the writing. It was Beebe who encouraged Johnny to use a phrase that became a trademark of the series.

"In the Tarzan pictures, we said, 'Ungawa' a lot," points out Sheffield. "Well, in the Bombas, the favorite phrase was 'Oona Tona Beebe.' To tell you the truth, I haven't the slightest idea what any of that means. Ford, who liked me to use Oona Tona Beebe because of the connection with his last name, put together a list of words and phrases that supposedly had some Swahili in them. I don't speak Swahili, so I can't say for sure Whatever the words' origins, they sounded pretty good "

Whereas the MGM Tarzan films had been given hefty funding and took more than two months to film, the Bomba movies operated on extremely limited financing ("B" studios existed hand-to-mouth; thin capitalization is one of the reasons that most of them were run aground so quickly by television) and the average shooting schedule lasted 10 days. Still, the Bombas served as a pleasant diversion for young audiences and a training ground for aspiring talent. Old pros, such as Lyle Talbot and Wayne Morris, probably didn't benefit from appearing in the jungle episodes, but others, including Peggy Ann Garner (who was making a transition from child parts), Beverly Garland, Elena Verdugo (soon to star in the TV sitcom MEET MILLIE and later to become Robert Young's nurse on MARCUS WELBY, M.D.), and Karen Sharpe (whom Johnny dated briefly), no doubt saw the experience as a stepping stone to better things.

"That was a chance to have a series of my own," recalls Sheffield. "We made no pretenses that we were out to produce Oscar films, or anything like that. Our objective was strictly entertainment, so the young people would have something to watch on Saturday afternoon. When I look back on it, it was kind of fun . . . Some of the films kids see today I'm not sure they should be exposed to. I always felt good about the Bomba shows. Even though they were low-budget, we did the best we could."

In 1955, having completed his last Bomba movie, *LORD OF THE JUNGLE*, as well as a cameo appearance in the John Wayne film *THE SEA CHASE* (he played a patron in a dining-room scene), Johnny Sheffield left acting. He had by that point already enrolled at the University of California at Los Angeles, from which he graduated with a degree in business administration. He denies that his many years playing jungle roles made it difficult for him to get offers for other parts.

"There were plenty of opportunities to act," says Sheffield. "It was just that that part of my life was over. I don't think anyone can be typecast so badly they can't get out of it if they want to. I believe it is more the individual and what he wants to do than it is the system."

Johnny went to Yuma, Arizona, to farm cotton and potatoes on 3,000 acres of land. He met his wife, Betty, in Yuma. Married for 33 years, the couple has two sons.

"I loved farming, but that was a little more than I could handle on my own," relates Sheffield. "So I came back to California and sold real estate. Then I was a rep-

resentative for a seafood company. Then a construction contractor in San Diego who specialized in refurbishing old buildings. Now I'm retired."

Johnny enjoyed acting, but dealing with the celebrity part of his career confused him, especially when he was young. Between films, he attended public school, where he was often targeted by other students, who tried to pick fights to prove their superiority. In time, he withdrew from the public and even started to deny his identity to people outside of the entertainment field.

"A question that I'm frequently asked is, 'What was it like to grow up in the movie business?'" remarks Sheffield. "Well, it's taken me more than 50 years to come close to an answer . . . I can tell you that, whereas a lot of children would go home from school and play Tarzan, I'd come home from work at the studio and go into hiding."

Two decades ago, Johnny had some problems with alcohol. He says that when he started doing things he didn't believe in, like driving drunk, he was able to realize his mistakes and begin putting them behind him. Today, he feels good about himself and what he has achieved. Attending conventions such as the one in Knoxville allows him to relive the positive aspects of his childhood and reminisce with actors and friends.

"A week doesn't go by that I don't receive a stack of letters from fans," says Sheffield. "Going to film festivals is one way of facing the people who've supported me and saying, 'Thanks.'"



Hollywood and Vines

Tarzan and the Leopard Woman

by David Fury

"Tarzan still is sternly holding aloof from one custom of Hollywood heroes. He never kisses these girls like Acquannetta. He just kills them and gets them off his mind . . ."

—New York World Telegram, February 9, 1946

Tarzan and family (Jane, Boy, and Cheetah) visit Zambesi to shop the bazaars for gifts for Jane's relatives, but the items Jane desires most have been sold and shipped to the new settlement at Bagandi. When the caravan to Bagandi is annihilated, a lone survivor tells of being attacked by leopards. Tarzan is suspicious: "Man not killed by leopards. Leopards never kill with claws alone—use teeth." Tarzan leads a safari to investigate, and they are indeed attacked by savage leopards, but the ape-man is not fooled by the ruse.

Behind the evil doings is the High Priestess Lea, ruler of a deadly cult which worships a leopard god. (The men wear leopard skins, claw their victims to death, and cut out their hearts to prove that they are men.) The luscious Lea is aided by the diabolical Lazar, a native doctor who has resolved to destroy the white men who have invaded his country and plundered its resources.

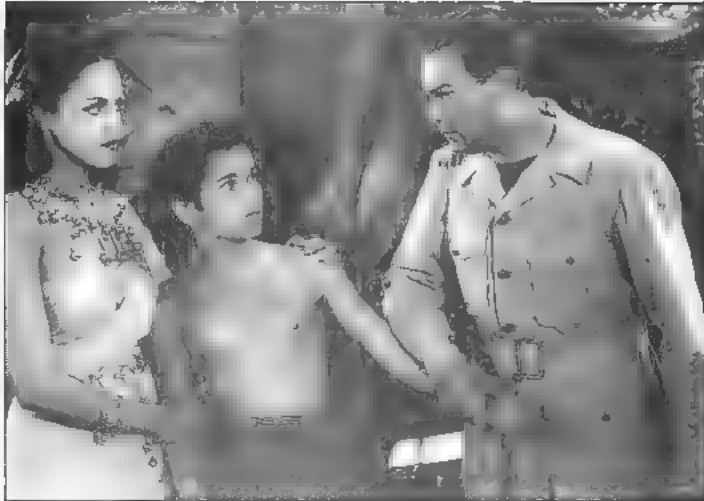
Against Lazar's wishes, Lea sends her demented little brother, Kimba, to spy on Tarzan, who poses a threat to her spotted cult. Feeling sorry for the "lost boy," Jane invites Kimba to move into the tree house for a while. She does not comprehend the evil that is in this jungle juvie's heart, but Tarzan and Boy do not trust the shifty-eyed Kimba—and with good reason, for he is intent on "becoming a man" by acquiring the kind-hearted Jane's kind heart.

Searching for Cheetah, Boy accidentally discovers Kimba's leopard costume in a cave, and tries it on for size. Moments later, he runs afoul of some leopard men, who chase him through the jungle. Only Tarzan's blade saves his son from death. When Boy returns home, he valiantly defends Jane from a murderous attack by Kimba. Locked in mortal combat, the two adolescents tumble off the tree-house porch and crash to the jungle floor, where Cheetah turns the tide by bopping Kimba on the head.

Meanwhile, four little maidens bound for school-teaching positions in Bagandi are kidnapped by the leopard men. Trying to free the girls, Tarzan himself is captured. Soon, Jane and Boy are added to the list of prisoners, and all are sentenced to die by sacrifice in a

Photo courtesy of the Burroughs Memorial Collection





LEFT: Acquanetta, Tommy Cook, and Edgar Barrier were a memorable trio of baddies in *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN* (1946). RIGHT: Kimba (Tommy Cook) worms his way into the good graces of Jane (Brenda Joyce), but flowers don't turn the heads of Tarzan and Boy (Johnny Weissmuller and Johnny Sheffield).

cult ceremony of the leopard people. "We shall fall upon our enemies and enslave them," cries the fanatical Lazar, with Lea by his side. "And this time we will offer our God the hearts of the Zambesi maidens as sacrifice! And Tarzan shall die as well!"

Naturally, it's Cheetah to the rescue. At Tarzan's order, the chimp cuts the bonds of the captives. When they are safely away, the ape-man goes into action, pulling down the pillars that support the cult's underground temple. Lea and the leopard worshippers are crushed. Dr. Lazar and Kimba survive, but in a bitter struggle fueled by hate, they die at each other's hands.

"Kimba want heart, Kimba get heart—Lazar's heart. Kimba dead, too," are the wise words of Tarzan. The mystery of the leopards who don't kill like leopards is solved, and the lord of the jungle has destroyed Lea and her strange, savage cult.

"Give me an actor like Johnny Weissmuller anytime. This was before all this Method crap and actors scratching their groins for 'motivation.' If I saw Weissmuller scratching his groin, I knew either his loincloth was too tight or he was pulling at his foreskin."

—director Richard Thorpe

In 1931, MGM was casting their new film, *TARZAN, THE APE MAN*, based on Edgar Rice Burroughs' heroic jungle character. Several actors were considered for the role, but were rejected, and fate's sometimes fortuitous hand tapped Johnny Weissmuller on the shoulder to be the new Lord of the Jungle. Screenwriter Cyril Hume, who was working on the screenplay for the new picture, was staying at the same hotel as Weissmuller, and was mightily impressed with his fellow guest's championship form in the swimming pool. Hume immediately contacted Metro director W. S. (Woody) Van Dyke, who wanted a new actor for his Tarzan, "a man who is young, strong, well-built, reasonably attractive, but not necessarily handsome, and a competent actor."

Johnny certainly filled the bill: If God had ever created a man who was physically perfect for a particular movie role, it was Weissmuller for the part of Tarzan. The absolute symmetry of his smoothly-muscled physique had made him a champion as the world's great-

est amateur swimmer—but he certainly wasn't muscle-bound. And his deep, brooding looks—that animal hunger in his eyes, and his snarling expressions—would bring fear to most any man or beast who aroused the displeasure of the ape-man.

After Metro worked out a compromise with B.V.D. (Johnny was promoting their swimwear), Weissmuller was signed, on October 16, 1931, to the standard seven-year contract as the new cinema Tarzan; his salary was \$250 per week. With virtually no acting experience, the ex-swimmer fell into the role of Tarzan as though he was made for it—his sleek, muscular-yet-symmetrical physique was like that of a lion, and his noble face and black mane of hair gave Tarzan a regal, "King of the Jungle" stature.

Though 15 years had passed since he'd broken into the movies in *TARZAN, THE APE MAN*, Johnny Weissmuller looked his physical best in years for his role as the ape-man in *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN* (1946). Approaching his mid-40s, the trimmed-down Johnny gave the impression that he could continue on as Tarzan indefinitely.

Weissmuller's newest jungle adventure was mostly non-stop action and thrilling drama, with Tarzan right in the middle of it all. The ape-man's battle with the leopard men in a crocodile-infested river, and again in the jungle, were exciting sequences; the scene in which Tarzan's safari is attacked by genuine leopards was particularly convincing. (One realizes, of course, that Weissmuller is "stabbing" a stuffed leopard, but the real cat footage, as edited by Robert Crandall, made the entire struggle appear very realistic.)

In an early scene in Zambesi, Tarzan takes part in a wrestling match with one of the local strongmen (played by a pro wrestler known as "King Kong Kashey"). Weissmuller easily hoisted the burly 200-pound Kashey over his head like a stuffed doll, and tossed him aside. The wrestler takes his defeat in stride, admitting (as they shake hands), "Again you have defeated Tongolo the Terrible. With Tarzan, Tongolo is not so terrible!"

Good as Weissmuller is in *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN*, he is not the whole show. Returning to the role she had taken over from Maureen O'Sullivan was Brenda Joyce as Jane, and Johnny Sheffield as Boy made his seventh film with his jungle dad.



RKO's TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN marked Johnny Sheffield's penultimate appearance as Boy. Next came 1947's **TARZAN AND THE HUNTRESS**, and then it was on to a six-year career as Bomba.

Back in 1939, the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer production of **TARZAN FINDS A SON!** had introduced a major addition to the winning team of Weissmuller and O'Sullivan. A son, portrayed by seven-year-old Johnny Sheffield, was added to the "family" of Tarzan. (The character of Boy, adopted by Tarzan and Jane after his parents die in a plane crash, was a radical departure from the heir created by Burroughs in his Tarzan books. In 1917's *The Son of Tarzan*, Lord and Lady Greystoke's natural son, Jack, was spirited away to Darkest Africa, where, following the family tradition, he quickly lost his clothes and inhibitions, becoming a mini-ape-man known as Korak the Killer. With the exception of 1920's *THE SON OF TARZAN*, in which Gordon Griffith and Kamuela C. Searle played Korak at different ages, the movies ignored this—just as they ignored the fact that Tarzan, as conceived by Burroughs, was a multilingual English lord.)

The hunt for the cinema son of Tarzan began with an MGM ad in *The Hollywood Reporter*, posing the question, "Do you have a Tarzan Jr. in your back yard?" In excess of 300 young boys were screened for the much-coveted role; needed was a lad who not only looked the part of a boy raised in the jungle, but one with the physical stamina to handle the difficult stunts involved.

At the time, young Johnny Sheffield had just finished working in the Broadway play *ON BORROWED TIME*, which had starred Dudley Digges. (Sheffield portrayed Digges' grandson, whose life hangs in the balance during a battle of wits between the old man and

Death.) After his parents responded to the ad, Sheffield was interviewed by the MGM brass and by Johnny Weissmuller as well. "Tarzan" (Weissmuller) personally gave the final okay on the selection of Sheffield as Boy, and gave his movie son swimming lessons before and during the production of their first film.

Born to an acting family (his father was English-born actor Reginald Sheffield), Johnny weighed only four pounds at birth. Johnny had been a frail and underweight child, but a program of vigorous exercise and healthy food, administered by his father, had made the future jungle boy the picture of health by age five.

Big John developed a strong affection for Little John (as he came to be called), and they were very close during the decade in which they made their eight Tarzan pictures together. In **TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN**, Little John (who wasn't quite so little anymore), engaged in serious battle for the first time on screen, defending Jane from the young killer who plans to—literally—win her heart. Proving he wasn't quite ready to step into Dad's shoes (not that Dad wore any), Boy needs help from Cheetah in order to defeat Kimba. (Then again, so does Tarzan in order to defeat Lea.)

Effectively portraying Lea, the High Priestess, was an actress who had chosen an unusual name for herself: Acquannetta (born Burnu Davenport in 1920). The sultry American beauty starred in numerous jungle and horror films in the 1940s, including *ARABIAN NIGHTS* (1942), *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN* (1943), *JUNGLE WOMAN* (1944), and *DEAD MAN'S EYES* (1944). The exotic, dangerous looks and demeanor of Acquannetta made her the quintessential choice as the villainess, Lea, ruler of the strange cult of leopard worshippers.

David Fury is a writer and songwriter. He is the author of Kings of the Jungle: An Illustrated Reference to Tarzan on Screen and Television (McFarland, 1994).

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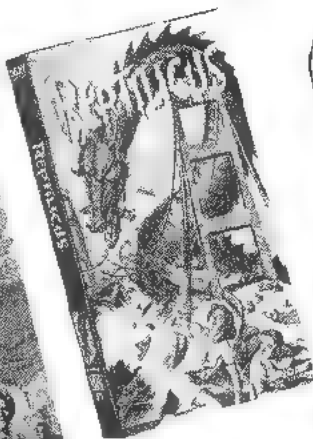
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LEFT: Tarzan (Johnny Weissmuller) has just saved The Andrews Sisters (and a friend) from the twin menaces of crocodiles and leopard men. RIGHT: The jungle gent leads Jane (Brenda Joyce), Boy (Johnny Sheffield), and four damsels in distress (okay, so they're not The Andrews Sisters) to safety.



The supporting cast included Edgar Barrier as Lea's cynical partner in crime, Dr. Lazar. Among the actor's extensive genre credits: *ARABIAN NIGHTS*, *FLESH AND FANTASY* (1943), *THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* (1943), *COBRA WOMAN* (1944), *A GAME OF DEATH* (1945), *THE WAR OF THE WORLDS* (1953), *THE GIANT CLAW* (1957), and *SNOW WHITE AND THE THREE STOOGES* (1961).

Tommy Cook, who, as an adult, would take a 1958 *MISSILE TO THE MOON*, turned in a superb performance as Lea's sly, twisted little brother, Kimba; and Dennis Hoey was at his blustering best as the Commissioner of Zambesi. (Hoey portrayed the similarly dense character of Inspector Lestrade in Universal's Sherlock Holmes thrillers, as well as Inspector Owen in 1943's *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*.) In the small role of the school superintendent was Doris Lloyd, who had portrayed Mrs. Cutten in the very first Weissmuller picture in 1932. The actress' genre credits include *A STUDY IN SCARLET* (1933), *TARZAN AND HIS MATE*

(1934), *THE WOLF MAN* (1941), *THE LODGER* (1944), and *THE TIME MACHINE* (1960).

Director Kurt Neumann molded an action-packed adventure from Carroll Young's original story and screenplay, which went into production on July 26, 1945, under the title *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD MEN*. (Burroughs had written a novel in 1935 called *Tarzan and the Leopard Men*; but for the fact that the book concerns a savage cult dressed in steel-clawed leopard skins, the story, one of many in which the jungle lord suffers from amnesia and takes on a new identity, bears scant resemblance to the motion picture.)

Neumann had been brought to America by Carl Laemmle, Jr. in the 1920s. At Universal, he directed German and Spanish versions of the studio's horror films, before landing *THE BIG CAGE* (1933), an exciting (if extremely brutal) circus thriller with lion-tamer Clyde Beatty. (Material from *THE BIG CAGE* turned up in *CAP-*

Continued on page 112

LEFT: High priestess Lea (Acquanetta) leads her chorus line of killers in one of *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN*'s big dance numbers. RIGHT: Watched by costar Edgar Barrier, Acquanetta playfully threatens Johnny Weissmuller with a jumbo-sized back-scratcher.



The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes *Granada's Final Bow?*

by David Stuart Davies

The truth is that there was far more drama off the set than on in *THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, the ultimate series of adaptations from Granada. Program scheduling (which in turn affects commissioning) for Independent Television is now governed by a faceless set of individuals who decide time slots, commercial appeal, acceptability, and feasibility. Never mind that the Granada Holmes is the studio's most profitable series worldwide, it has to sit in line and wait to receive its apportion.

In late May of 1993, June Wyndham Davies was set to produce two feature-length Holmes programs—pastiche adaptations “in the style of” (and I should know, because one of the projects was mine)—when the Big Brothers decided “two hours bad, one hour good.” After a few days of scurrying round, June grasped the nettle, said yes, and set about (a), digging out a couple of 60-minute scripts from the vaults and (b), contacting tried and tested stalwart writers to see what they could come up with from the remaining stories that could be adapted to suit.

Script editor Craig Dixon told me in 1992 that they had really scraped the bottom of the barrel regarding the Conan Doyle stories (*THE LAST VAMPIRE* and *THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR* seem to bear this out), but money dictates. By 1993, Dixon had moved on and Elizabeth Bradley was brought in. She is a delightful woman, but her knowledge of Sherlock is weak, and the dictate from the top was “cut out the talk—let’s do visuals.” (Where’s Eille Norwood when you need him?)

The series got off to a bad start. Edward Hardwicke was filming *SHADOWLANDS*, and so Charles Gray was brought in as an amorphous Mycroft—the Watson substitute to take his place. Those who know the Canon know that Mycroft, rather like Nero Wolfe, would never get off his big fat butt to see if the milk had been delivered, let alone toddle off to Yoxley place with his irritating brother to investigate a trivial murder. But here we’re dealing with mass-audience television; it moves mountains—and Mycroft was the mountain it moved.

Visually, *THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ* is stunning. The flashback scenes of the Russian Revolution belie the fact

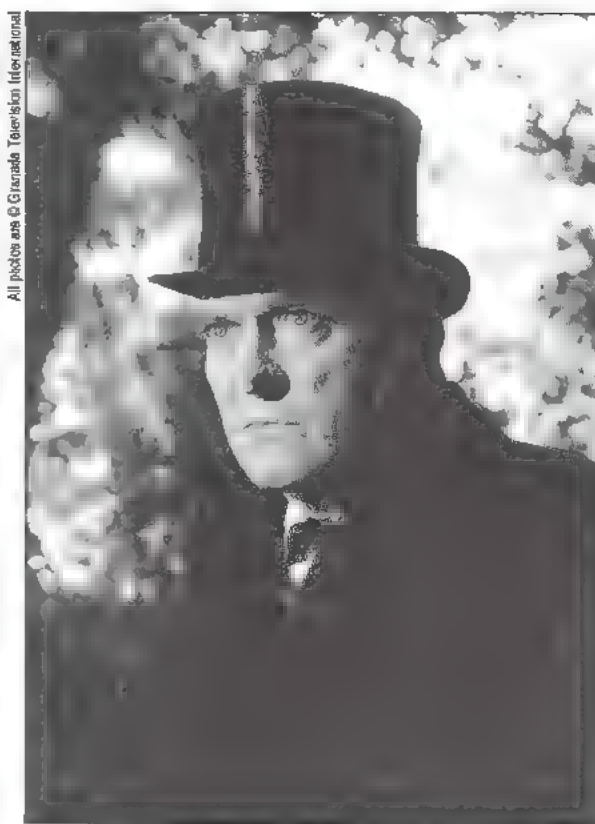
that only 17 extras and two horses were used. The script by Gary Hopkins is fairly faithful, but whether it was because Hardwicke was absent or that Brett seemed so large and slow, the whole thing lacked pace and suspense. When at last you understood what was going on, you cared little for the outcome. Yes, I am being ultra-critical, I guess, but when one considers the bedrock programs of the first series, this simply does not measure up—Watson or no Watson.

Although *THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ* was the first story filmed, *THE THREE GABLES* was the first shown in the UK. This was, in many ways, an agreeable production. It was visually exciting and rich in locations, but director Peter Hammond paid too much attention to the pretty pictures and too little to the mechanics of the plot and the performances. There were images galore, many of which were reflected in mirrors, windows, eyeglasses—any reflective surface apart from the shine on Brett’s suit. While this was going on, some performers were allowed to overact dreadfully, particularly Gary Cady as the doomed Douglas Maberly, whose death scene seemed to have been yanked from a risible Italian opera.

Jeremy Paul has nicely teased out the story to create in Isadora Klein (Claudine Aubert) a villainess worthy of Holmes’ steel, but the idea that one page

of a rambling reminiscence by Maberly could ruin this startling beauty (even taking into account Victorian values and mores) was a little difficult to believe. There were other flaws. The fact that Holmes leaves Watson alone to protect the old lady from a group of thugs seems irresponsible enough, but for Watson to remain in his room while the old dear potters away downstairs on her own, speaks of sloppy scripting.

The final confrontation between Holmes and Isadora, during which the detective has to grab her wrists before her flashing nails can blood his face, did not quite generate the excitement it should. Sadly, it is all too clear from his uncertain movements and wheezing delivery that Brett was far from well during the production. Indeed, he was hospitalized briefly after the film’s completion.



Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes



LEFT: The indispensable Mrs. Hudson (Rosalie Williams) comforts a befuddled Mrs. Warren (Betty Marsden) in *THE RED CIRCLE*. RIGHT: *THE MAZARIN STONE* features a gaggle of Garridebs, played by Gavin O'Herlihy, Sebastian Shaw, Phyllis Calvert, and Barbara Hicks.

The reason that this episode was chosen to be shown first is fairly obvious. Apart from two splendid performances from Aubert and Peter Wyngarde (as Langdale Pike), the film is sumptuous: It looks a million dollars, but the content has a somewhat lesser value.

When I interviewed a weary Jeremy Brett on the final day of filming *THE CARDBOARD BOX* in January, he averred that, despite the problems of this series, it contained two or three of the best programs he had ever done. I was skeptical. However, the second film to be shown to British viewers, *THE DYING DETECTIVE*, more or less fits Brett's claim. It is cunningly scripted by Trevor Bowen. While retaining most of the original story, which is presented in the third act, Bowen creates a prequel to these events which is not only Doylean but is clever and authentic in tone and detail. Culverton Smith (Jonathan Hyde), the poisoning villain, expert on Tapanuli Fever, has led his cousin, Victor Savage (Richard Bonneville), into debt and drug taking. Savage has ambitions to be a poet and, rather like Coleridge, he has the notion that opium will break the dam of fevered imagination for him. Ravaged and weakened by drug abuse, he dies of a rare tropical fever. Smith now can snatch up the properties of Savage and his young wife (Susannah Harker) for his own. It is she who seeks help from the Baker Street sage.

The idea of destroying lives for gain or property is particularly Doylean. (See "The Blue Carbuncle," "The Three Garridebs," "A Case of Identity," "The Three Gables," et al.) Added to this case, it creates an extra frisson—Sherlock Holmes apparently becomes a victim of this greed, too. While allowing his creative juices to flow freely, Bowen (who, Hitchcock-like, appears as Mrs. Savage's solicitor) has remained faithful to the essence of the original. The final segment, wherein Smith visits the "dying" sleuth, contains many of the original lines ("Painful, is it? Yes, the coolies used to do some squealing towards the end"), some of which appear so fresh and telling that it is hard to conceive of their having been written so long ago. Among my favorites is Smith's observation regarding Holmes' apparently limited life span: "I

don't see you in the witness box, my dear Holmes. Quite another shaped box, I assure you."

There are moments that jar—for instance, Holmes' shouting challenge to Smith outside his house, his cries aimed at an upper-story window behind which Smith gazes down with disdain on the detective. However, in general this is a fine episode. Brett's all too obvious fragile health is actually a bonus in this piece. He collapsed more than once on the set and, after struggling through to the end, he was packed off to hospital for over a month, leaving June Wyndham Davies with a greater puzzle than that of the unwritten case of the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant: How do you make a Sherlock Holmes film without Sherlock Holmes?

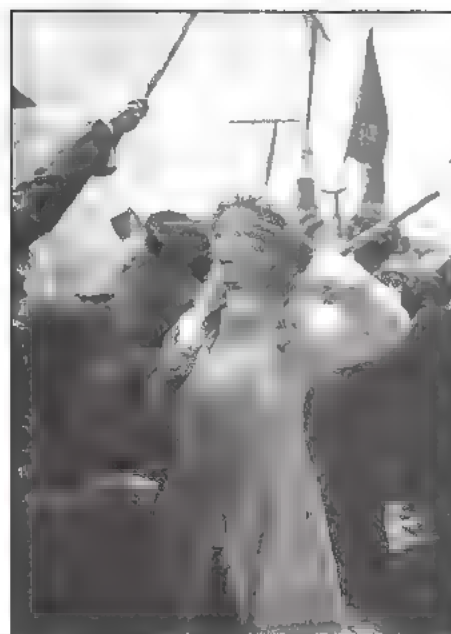
Indeed, this was the producer's dilemma. Already, three weeks had been lost because of Brett's convalescence after *THE THREE GABLES*, so June had to press on. *THE MAZARIN STONE*, a script which had elements of "The Three Garridebs" as well as its title story, had already been created by Gary Hopkins. It was hastily rewritten to (a), exclude Sherlock and (b), reintroduce brother Mycroft.

It does not work!

The cast features some stalwarts of British television and film: Jon Finch, Phyllis Calvert, and James Villiers—all acting their socks off. Given a healthy Holmes and a script editor who could have cut down on the whimsy and generated a more realistic denouement, this could have been special—but it was not to be. It is another of Peter Hammond's reflection-obsessed vehicles.

The opening scene, in which Holmes inexplicably tells Watson that he must be away to "the high lands," was filmed much later—and was, according to Brett, his own idea. He wanted to inject a sense of mysticism into Holmes' absence, along with an implication that he was still tortured by the Reichenbach incident. (Perhaps Holmes' visit to the high lands or the Highlands may be later filmed as *The Adventure of the Tossed Caber*.)

The Mazarin Stone, on display for 10 years in the Whitehall Museum, is stolen just before it is to be re-



LEFT: Commissionaire Jenkins (Michael Wynne) and Inspector Bradstreet (Denis Lill) look to Mycroft Holmes (Charles Gray) for a solution to the mystery of *THE MAZARIN STONE*. **RIGHT:** Anna (Anna Carteret) is a (Russian) Revolutionary character in *THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ*.

turned to France (from whence it came) as a goodwill gesture by the British Government. The Prime Minister is insistent that Sherlock Holmes recovers the precious stone, but, as we know, he's in the high lands. Mycroft is approached in the Diogenes Club by Lord Cantlemere (James Villiers). In *THE GREEK INTERPRETER*, Holmes tells Watson that "No talking is, under any circumstances, permitted." The rules must have changed by the time of this investigation, because Cantlemere and Mycroft carry on a conversation at full belt without interruption or complaint. Mind you, who would argue with a hulking great creature like Mycroft? Charles Gray, a charismatic actor who, in recent years, has swelled greatly, seems to have loaned out the corset this week. However, his considerable girth is galvanized into action.

We then witness Mycroft taking on Sherlock's role—slipping, most unconvincingly, into disguise as he tracks bad guy Count Negretto Sylvius (a nice performance from Finch). This Mycroft is a far cry from the one whom Holmes describes in *THE GREEK INTERPRETER*: "... he has no ambition and no energy. He will not even go out of his way to verify his own solutions"

Meanwhile, the silly subplot involves Watson trying to help a couple of gaga spinsters, the Garrideb Sisters, who believe their brother is being taken for a ride by a certain Nathan Garrideb. There is, as you might have guessed, a connection between these two threads—a connection which is so unconvincing as to be confusing to the average viewer.

Mycroft finally tracks the Count to the docks, where the villain is attempting to leave the country with the stone. By the sheer threat of his bulk and piercing stare, Mycroft subdues Negretto—who, in a desperate bid to avoid this mountain of flesh squashing him beyond recognition, stumbles and falls onto a mud flat. This is enough for him to surrender himself to justice. "Well done, brother mine," intones a disembodied voice. We catch a glimpse of Sherlock enveloped in mist (a sequence filmed later), as though to indicate that he has been observing all the events from afar—up the high land, in fact.

THE RED CIRCLE features the main elements from the original, with added Italian gusto from the pen of Jeremy Paul. The script was actually written some years ago and put on the shelf. Dust was blown off it and rewrites ordered when production of *THE MEMOIRS* was approved. Although the end result betrays evidence of the tampering, the story-telling is tight and we are conscious that here is a real detective tale, with a puzzle to challenge the deductive powers of Holmes. It is a satisfying film.

There are obvious Paul touches throughout, especially those with which he builds up Watson's role and character, giving him some detective work to do. When Holmes is shown the note written by Mrs. Warren's mysterious lodger, he flings it across to Watson with a quizzical grunt. Watson scrutinizes the note and responds: "The pencil is broad-tipped and violet-tinted and used with considerable pressure. The paper has been torn off at the side . . ." (These words are uttered by Holmes in the original tale.)

The Italian influence leads to the Opera House, where Black Gorgiano, the revenge-seeking leader of the Red Circle, strikes down another victim. In a scene straight out of Gaston Leroux's *The Phantom of the Opera*, a singer reaching for a high note lifts her head and gazes upwards into the flies—where she sees the bloodied corpse hanging, mouth agape in a silent cry. Predictably, the note turns into a scream.

The denouement is exciting, with Paul improving on the original. There is also a lovely exit line from Holmes addressing Inspector Hawkins (replacing Gregson in the story): "The law is what we live with. Justice is sometimes harder to achieve."

The final film in the series . . . nay, the final film, is *THE CARDBOARD BOX*. It is perhaps the best in the series. Trevor Bowen has brilliantly taken the major elements of the original story and strengthened them. In doing so, he has deepened the mystery and heightened the tragedy. Brett told me on that cold day in January that he thought "this one is special"—and I think it is. It is not a classic Holmes mystery, but it contains so many of

the elements that have made the whole collection of films remarkable. It has excellent performances, especially from Ciaran Hinds as Jim Browner, and is exquisitely directed by Sarah Hellings. The film also features Joanna David as one of the Cushing sisters. (She played Mrs. De Winter to Brett's Maxim in the very successful TV version of REBECCA.)

The opening of the film will warm the hearts of all Sherlock Holmes fans. We see the Great Detective and his biographer seated by a blazing fire in their Baker Street rooms, each smoking a pipe, conversing like old friends about the recent spate of grave robberies. This domestic vignette is the concentrated essence of what is so enjoyable about the stories and the films. Edward Hardwicke unfailingly maintains the image of the ideal Watson in this and every one of the episodes. Holmes may well regard him as "the best and nicest man I have ever known." We feel that, too, and it is all credit to a splendid actor.

The original tale is set in "blazing August," with Paget's illustrations featuring Holmes wearing a straw boater. Granada was stuck with filming in January, but they have turned this to their advantage, with the stark black-and-white, snowclad locales mirroring the bleak elements of this domestic tragedy—this "crime of passion."

One thrills to see Brett back, after a month in hospital, at nearly his ideal weight and uttering such lines as "This is no practical joke; this is a serious crime," as he gazes at the gruesome contents of the cardboard box: a pair of severed ears. There are pleasing interchanges between Mrs. Hudson (Rosalie Williams) and her lodger, too. One wishes that Colin Jeavons could have made it into this final outing as Lestrade, although Tom Chadbon, playing Inspector Hawkins for a second time, is very good.

Brett told me that he was very pleased that the final words he utters are a paraphrase of Conan Doyle's. As they find the tragic lovers in the river, frozen beneath a sheet of ice, Holmes turns to his companion and says, "What is the meaning of it, Watson? What is the object of this circle of misery and violence and fear? It must

have a purpose, or else our universe has no purpose and that is unthinkable. But what? That is humanity's great problem to which reason so far has no answer."

The night before THE CARDBOARD BOX was transmitted, Granada held a gala evening to celebrate 10 years of Sherlock. Jeremy Brett, who, since finishing the series, had gone back into hospital, a mental hospital—a nut house, he jokingly called it—had been allowed out for the day. I met him for a chat before the razzmatazz began. He looked good—his own lean self, in fact, if a little craggier. However, there was still evidence of that "circle of misery" in his own life. He had been on drugs since 1987 to help stabilize his mental condition, and these had gradually caused other health problems, especially with his heart. Brett had been suffering from gradual lithium poisoning for seven years. His psychiatrist, who had accompanied him for the day, assured me that Brett was on the mend, but there was some way to go yet. It all

seemed so sad. It was as though the great manic shadow of Sherlock Holmes had settled on Jeremy's soul and was crushing him.

Jeremy Brett will get well again, but I fear that he has cast aside the dark penguin suit and pale white makeup for the last time. We cannot blame him. But he can be assured that, in years to come, when we look back on his canon of work for Granada, he will be recognized as a great Sherlock Holmes.



Edward Hardwicke, Susannah Harker, and Rachel Rice in THE DYING DETECTIVE.



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SING ALONG WITH ALADDIN

Broadway's Jonathan Freeman and Brad Kane Give Voice to Disney's



THE RETURN OF JAFAR



by Ken Schactman and Jessie Lilley

Proving that you can't keep a good villain down, Walt Disney Home Video has come out with its first original, made-for-video, animated movie, *THE RETURN OF JAFAR*, starring that most malicious, vicious, cunning, corrupt, and enjoyably wicked Vizier. In this all-new *ALADDIN*-inspired adventure, all of the characters—Aladdin, Jasmine, the Genie, Abu, Iago, the Sultan, and of course, Jafar—are back in an action-packed story with five new songs. The movie picks up where *ALADDIN* ended, with the evil sorcerer-turned-genie trapped inside a magic lamp. When a clumsy thief inadvertently releases Jafar, the all-powerful "Genie Jafar" plots his revenge against Aladdin.

At the intersection of *Scarlet Street* and Broadway, we tracked down Jonathan Freeman (the voice of Jafar) and Brad Kane (the singing voice of Aladdin) for comments on *ALADDIN*, *JAFAR*, and other high points in their careers. Curiously enough, they were both playing in the same Broadway musical: *SHE LOVES ME*.

"We got along great," joked Freeman. "We didn't have scenes together! It was a big surprise to discover that Brad was doing it; I didn't know until the first day of rehearsal, actually." (Brad Kane could be considered a Broadway baby, having snagged a role in *EVITA* at the age of nine, then going on to *SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE*.)

THE RETURN OF JAFAR is merely the first nugget in Disney's *ALADDIN* gold mine: It will be followed by

a new TV series. We asked Jonathan Freeman if his character will be a continuing presence. "Well, he gets through the first four episodes [*THE RETURN OF JAFAR*] before he's killed off yet again, but all it means is they're

waiting for the next inventive writer to resurrect him. In the first four episodes he's out to squash the Genie, who now doesn't have total genie powers. Jafar has a fantastic song called 'You're Only Second Rate.'"

Jafar had no songs to himself in the original *ALADDIN*, though not for lack of trying. "There were actually five different songs," said Freeman. "I don't mean that I was meant to have five songs, but they always meant him to have one big song. It went by the wayside, because when you put together an animated musical feature, it's very much like putting together a new musical comedy. Plots change, characters change, so sometimes there is no longer a story line to support the song. 'Humiliate The Boy,' by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken, was a wonderful song. It took place in a scene in which Jafar became a judge and cross-examined the genie. Toward the end of the song, Jafar, through black magic, literally stripped Aladdin of all his clothes and humiliated him publicly in front of the whole town of Agrabah. I was sorry for more than one reason that

Howard died. It was a great loss to the project, because Howard had the 'big picture' vision.

"After Howard died, Alan wrote a song by himself for Jafar. It was sort of a 'Those Were the Days, My Friend'—





LEFT: One of the highlights of Jonathan Freeman's stage career was appearing with the glamorous Alexis Smith in the musical *PLATINUM*. The former Warner Bros. actress had appeared in such films as *NIGHT AND DAY* (1946) and *THE TWO MRS. CARROLLS* (1947). **RIGHT:** Brad Kane (pictured with Louis Zorich) smiles up a storm in Broadway's *SHE LOVES ME*. **NEXT PAGE:** Jonathan Freeman menaced the Great Detective in the 1970s Broadway revival of William Gillette's *SHERLOCK HOLMES*.

you know, Jafar reminiscing about his terrible childhood and how he got to where we see him. Then Tim Rice came onto the project. Tim and Alan wrote another wonderful song called 'Why Me?' that actually got out of the demo stage; we went into the studio with a 60-piece orchestra and recorded it. It was quite wonderful, but it brought the movie to a crashing halt. Well, 'Why Me?' was rewritten and called 'Master of the Lamp,' but it was basically the same song. And then there was a song called 'My Finest Hour,' I don't think that ever got recorded."

Brad didn't record any songs that were cut, "But I auditioned with some. As the script changed, the songs that Alan wrote to fit each draft were either cut or made into new songs. Actually, there was a very beautiful song called 'Proud of Your Boy.'"

Jonathan agreed. "The story changed a lot. Aladdin had a mother at one point. He had a couple of friends at one point. And there was a trio of school bullies who went around the town wreaking havoc. There were several songs dropped for that reason. One was a beautiful ballad called 'Proud of Your Boy' that Aladdin sang to his mother."

Does this mean that the public will never be able to enjoy that song, or any of the other musical efforts that were abandoned along the way? Perhaps not Brad thought that "A lot of the songs that were cut will eventually be on an album of songs by Alan Menken and Howard Ashman." As for the new songs in *JAFAR*, "I think they might put them out . . . It depends on the success of the series."

Disney's villains—which include the wicked queen in *SNOW WHITE* (1937), the cruel stepmother in *CINDERELLA* (1950), the evil faerie Maleficent in *SLEEPING BEAUTY* (1959), and now the incomparably sadistic Jafar—have fascinated audiences for generations. Why? "I think they always appealed to me," mused Mr. Free-

man, "because there is something very elegant about them, even in their ugliness."

Jafar's voice, its snakelike, shuddery quality, defines his character. How did Jonathan Freeman work his way into it? "I actually experimented a lot; I tried to decide what would be most effective. Originally I worked on Arabian dialects and things like that, and they just sounded comical. There wasn't any way that I could make it work, so I decided to smooth him out, make him very well-educated and try to do that very duplicitous quality of his—on the one hand seeming very sweet and sincere, and then turning on a dime and slicing you in two with his eyes."

Disney often uses its vocal talent to provide artists with guidelines for the animation. Was this the case with both Freeman and Kane? "Absolutely," laughed Jonathan. "He went through many, many reincarnations, before they even got to me. Once I got the job I went to the animation building and saw 30 or 40 drawings of Jafar by different artists. In some he was short and fat, in some he was very little, in some he was sort of lizardlike, and in some he was sort of snagg-e-toothed and smelly. A lot of his mannerisms are mine. Andres Deja, the principle animator for Jafar, took a lot of body language, particularly the hands, from me."

"Yes. I can definitely say yes," enthused Brad, "because they videotaped my mouth during the recording of the songs. When the animators drew Aladdin's mouth, it suggested my mannerisms. For instance, when I sang, 'I think I'll take a stroll around the block' from the song 'One Jump Ahead,' I kind of sang it out of the side of my mouth. They captured that in the movie. A lot of my friends who've seen the movie said Aladdin looks like me a little, but that was completely a coincidence."

These two talented actors have something else in common, a love of sci-fi. In fact, Jonathan does voice work

for the Sci-Fi Channel. And what about horror and mystery? "Well, of course!" answered Jonathan. "The first Broadway show I ever did was the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of SHERLOCK HOLMES. I played a character called Lightfoot McTague, one of Moriarty's men. I came on in the second act, and I had to make my way through some fog and instantly get beat up. Then I had to make my way into the underground where there was a very complicated scene with knives and sticks and people in and out of cupboards and tied up with rope. It was a very fast scene. Not getting enough rehearsal, it was terrifying at first. I went to the theater for my first day of rehearsal, and they said, 'Oh, just watch the show today.' It was a matinee, and then they said, 'Oh, just come back and watch it tonight'—and watch it the next day and the next and the next. I kept watching and thinking, 'When am I gonna get on?' Well, the first night I made my way out of the orchestra pit and through the fog, and got beat up, and the stage lights went to black—and I couldn't find my way off the stage!"

Jonathan remembered that Robert Stephens, who earlier had starred in the 1970 film THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, was playing the inimitable detective. "There were a series of them. The first one, John Wood, came over with the Royal Shakespeare Company. He was replaced by either American or British stars—in most cases British stars, I think."

Jonathan also played opposite several Napoleons of Crime. "Fred Stussman was Moriarty for awhile. Alan

Sues was one of them . . ." Alan Sues of LAUGH-IN? Alan Sues as the greatest criminal genius ever known? The mind reels, the world trembles, the—well, find your own superlatives!



Brad Kane's preference is for horror. "I love watching horror movies. You know, no movie was restricted to me when I was younger; I got to see all the R-rated movies. I remember, when NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET came out, I went to see it with a friend and we were scared out of our minds! No one knew who Freddy was, and it was really a treat to see the birth of this new kind of monster."

Brad also enjoys the old horror classics. "Those movies are really on a different artistic level, I think. There's a lot of subtext, a lot that's been taken from the novels from which they originate. They're more a part of our classic past, I guess you could say, than the cheap thrills of today's horror movies. Which is not to say that cheap thrills aren't good!"

And is there a Freddy in Brad's future? "I'd like to be in something in which a new, original, scary character was born. Like Freddy; that kind of thing. I'd like to play the monster! The psychopath! Yeah! Why not? That would be kinda fun! That would be quite a stretch for me—from Aladdin to a psychopath in a horror movie. I don't know; maybe it's not too far a stretch!"

And if it ever comes to pass that Brad Kane plays a monster, then Jonathan Freeman, the erstwhile Jafar, could play the hero. Complete revolution!

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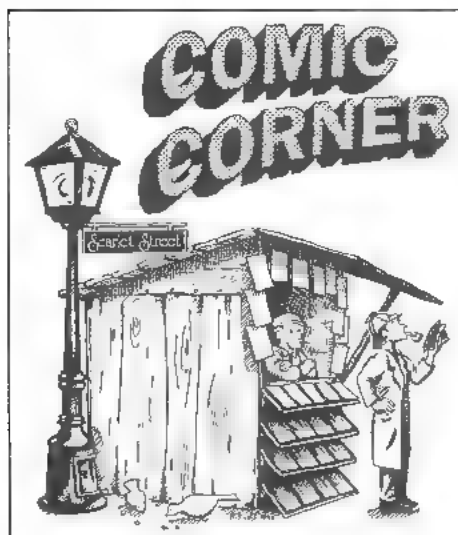


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Evil Lurks

Dark Horse knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men. Now you can, too, if you pick up the latest comic books spotlighting the adventures of the recently-revived Shadow.

The popular radio/magazine/movie character has appeared often in the comic format. In fact, many comic artists in the 1950s and 1960s acknowledged that they were influenced heavily by the radio programs and pulp magazines of the 1930s and 1940s. The Shadow was the star of several comic titles over the years, as well as a long-running syndicated newspaper strip. Cult favorite Doc Savage also solved many bronze-powered mysteries in the pages of *The Shadow Magazine*. Issues of *The Shadow* published by Street & Smith Publications in the 1940s fetch prices as high as \$1,200 each.

With the upcoming Universal blockbuster film *THE SHADOW* heading our way this summer (see this issue's *News Hound*), it made sense to give Lamont Cranston another chance in comic books. Popular artist Mike Kaluta set the stage for the return of The Shadow in Dark Horse Comics. Kaluta was noted for bringing The Shadow to life for DC Comics in the 1970s. His work was followed by a Howard Chaykin series in 1986.

In *The Shadow: In the Coils of the Leviathan*, Kaluta again revives the glory of The Shadow by making pulp-style writing a part of the storyline. We don't want to give away too much here, but it's a grim tale that will delight new and old Shadow fans.

Those who find themselves enthralled by Mike Kaluta's ability to spin a good yarn may also want to pick up a copy of Dark Horse's movie adaptation of *THE SHADOW*. Like the *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*

adaptation by Topps Comics, *THE SHADOW* movie adaptation adds an extra element of depth to the film.

According to Dark Horse, Kaluta's adaptation is not a frame by frame artist rendition of the film. It is rather Kaluta's interpretation of the movie, so it differs slightly from the script by David Koepp.

What A Blast

Does anyone remember Johnny Dynamite, the one-eyed detective who appeared in the pages of Charlton Comics in the 50s? He was the hard-boiled dick intended as a comic-book version of Mickey Spillane's hard-as-nails Mike Hammer.

Well, Detective-story novelist Max A. Collins remembers him, and he's revived Johnny Dynamite with a little twist, offering up a tale of sex, revenge, and murder. *Johnny Dynamite: Underworld* is a three-part miniseries published by Dark Horse. In *Underworld*, Johnny faces a tough palooka who isn't smart enough to die when Johnny plugs him. Johnny's a tough fella himself, but even he can't be prepared for the bizarre twists in Collins' plot.

Artist Terry Beatty gives Johnny Dynamite the perfect 50s retro look. His clear, accurate style is reminiscent of the pre-superhero comics of that era. Beatty and Collins have created a seamless story that deserves the accolades it will surely receive.

Big Red Cheese

If "The Big Red Cheese" means more to you than just something you should toss from the fridge, you probably remember the original Captain Marvel (which, for legal purposes, DC Comics must publicize as *Shazam*.)

For all the heroes they kill, DC Comics does a wonderful job reviving other ones. In fact, Jerry Ordway's revival of the Big Red Cheese in *The Power of Shazam* is a book well worth the wait.

Like many of today's top comic-book storytellers, Ordway revises and builds upon the legend of *Shazam* for dramatic effect. The result is a compelling moral tale of corrupting greed and power. (Do the names "Sivana" and

"Black Adam" ring a bell?) *The Power of Shazam* is a must for the Billy Batson in all of us.

The King Is Dead

Scarlet Street sadly notes the passing of one of the great legends of comic books. Jack Kirby died on February 7, 1994 of heart failure. He was 76.

Kirby is best known for his artistic contributions to Marvel Comics. His creations include Captain America, Spider-Man, The Hulk, The Silver Surfer, The Fantastic Four, and The X-Men.

His innovations earned him the esteemed title of "The King." Kirby's work was distinct, stylistic, often imitated, but never bettered.

Meanwhile, Back in the Belfry

Hot on the tail of the release of *BATMAN: MASK OF THE PHANTASM* comes the official comic adaptation. The story features the same striking, Japanese-style artwork that made the Fox animated television show an Emmy-winning hit.

DC also announced the release of *Batman: Knightfall*, the novel (Bantam) and the audiobook (Time Warner AudioBooks). These are novelizations of the story line that left Batman maimed and the psychotic Azrael in his place. For more on Bats and Company, check out *Zero Hour* in this issue of *Scarlet Street*.

—Buddy Scaleria



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Holy Zero Hour!

DC's New Miniseries Fills in the Holes by Buddy Scalera

They killed Superman. They trashed Robin. Obliterated The Flash. Maimed Batman. They've done horrible, monstrous things to the heroes we've come to love and admire.

No, we're not talking about The Joker. It's not Lex Luthor or Captain Cold or The Weather Wizard we're discussing. In fact, it's none of those evil, wicked villains who have terrorized our lovable heroes over the years.

No, the killers are the DC Comics editorial staff!

Before venting your rage over the slaying of your childhood funny-book heroes, consider this: They may be coming back. DC did it before with Superman, so they may as well do it again with some of their other superstars.

DC contends that their upcoming summer crossover *The Zero Hour* will tie up loose ends in the company's oftentimes confusing universe. Perhaps significantly, it comes at a time when Warner Bros. is preparing the third Batmovie, *BATMAN FOREVER*, featuring Dick Grayson, the original Robin the Boy Wonder.

According to DC Comics' press information, a strange time anomaly occurs during the Zero Hour. "The dead live, doppelgangers exist, people and places are . . .

changing." DC sources say that characters who have not been seen for some time will reappear and may even make permanent comebacks in this turbulent series, which crosses into nearly every DC title.

Thanks to the current plans for *BATMAN FOREVER* and *BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES* (in which Grayson is featured as Robin), DC may feel compelled to place a greater emphasis on the Boy Wonder. At the time of this writing, Warners has not announced the stars of the movie, which will be directed by Joel Schumacher. It's assumed that Michael Keaton will return as Batman to face Tommy Lee Jones as Harvey Dent/Two-Face (the role played by Billy Dee Williams in the first Batfilm) and Jim Carrey (stepping in when Robin Williams was less than pleased with the size of the role) as The Riddler. Though Warners made a big splash with open cattle calls for the role of Robin, the odds-on favorite is *THREE MUSKETEERS* star Chris O'Donnell.

DC has featured at least five different Robin characters, one of whom (Jason Todd) was killed off in the late 1980s by fickle fans. The current Robin comic doesn't feature Dick Grayson, but rather a slicker, Generation X character

named Tim Drake. FOX, the network that airs the popular *ANIMATED SERIES*, has asked Warner Bros. to place a greater emphasis on Robin (voiced by Loren Lester).

If *BATMAN FOREVER* were to feature Tim Drake, DC would have no problem. That Warners has chosen to use Dick Grayson, however, may pose an interesting logistical situation. Consider that Dick Grayson has long since fluttered from the pages of *Detective Comics*. He has grown significantly from the pubescent sidekick of Batman into an angry adult superhero known as Nightwing.

DC won't divulge the surprises of the *Zero Hour* storyline, but a publicity drawing tells a different story: The illustration shows two Robins (the current and the original) and Batgirl. Asked if the *Zero Hour* storyline has two Barbara Gordons and two Dick Graysons on the planet at

the same time, *Zero Hour* Assistant Editor Mike McAvennie said, "There is, but there shouldn't be. That's the problem. That's how some people know that something is out of place and it's up to the heroes to fix it."

For obvious reasons, DC is reluctant to say just how *Zero Hour* will affect their characters. Batgirl already appears in *The Batman Adventures*, a comic based on the animated series, so reviving her in the other Batbooks might not be im-

plausible; however, DC has not solicited a Batgirl title for 1994. "With characters like Batgirl, we don't know how it's going to come out, whether or not if this Batgirl is going to exist again or not," claims McAvennie.

Over the years, DC has permitted writers to kill or maim characters for any number of reasons. For example, although Batgirl (aka Barbara Gordon, daughter of Commissioner Gordon) is alive, she is no longer fully ambulatory. A bullet wound to the spine in *The Killing Joke* story line left her crippled. Barbara Gordon still fights crime, but now she is known as The Oracle.

DC seems also to be hinting at reviving Barry Allen, the company's most popular Flash. As with Robin, the Flash costume has been donned by a number of characters, including the current Wally West. In recent years, DC has learned that the quickest way to sales is to toy with the lead character. Last year alone, they killed and resurrected Superman and broke Batman's back. This year they have radical changes in store for such classic characters as Green Lantern and Hawkman.

As a way of introducing Impulse, a sort of Kid Flash from the future, Barry Allen may return as the Flash during



Zero Hour artwork © 1994 DC Comics

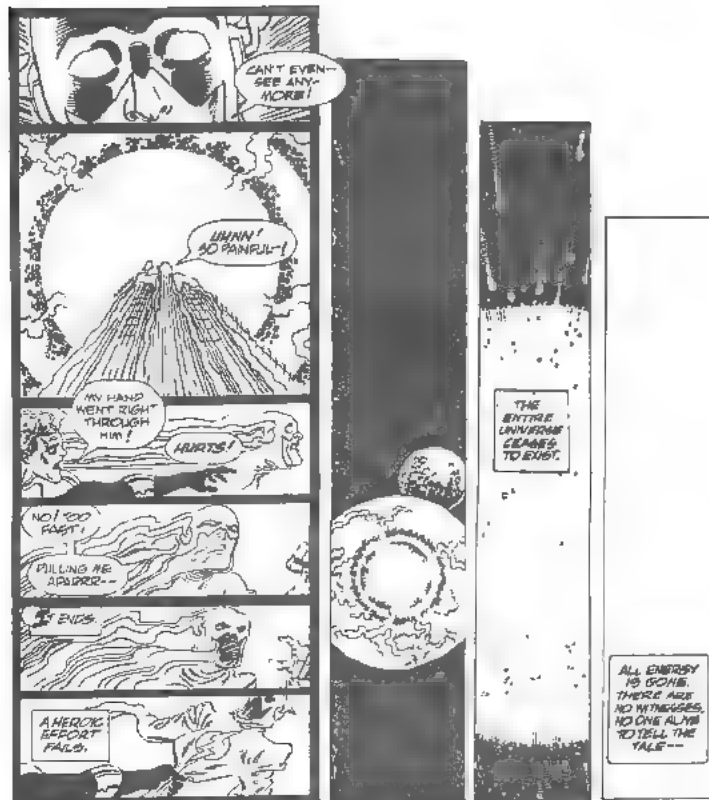
Zero Hour. Flash editor Brian Augustyn says that, in a dramatic turn, Wally West disappears from the earth. Fans of the current Flash shouldn't worry, claims Augustyn; the series will continue long after the *Zero Hour* crossover. "On the other side of the miniseries, we continue to have a Flash comic book," says Augustyn.

Augustyn says that, as far as he knows, even if Barry Allen does make an appearance in *Zero Hour*, the appearance will only be temporary. Unlike Superman, The Flash apparently has no ability to return from the dead.

In *Zero Hour*, as in the earlier *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, DC will attempt to neatly tie up loose ends that took decades to unravel. DC has often bent the rules of credibility and common sense when it comes to killing and reviving characters. *Zero Hour* is an ambitious series that promises to have far-reaching effects on all the characters in the DC universe. (The problem, as *Crisis on Infinite Earths* proved, is that, once everything is straightened out and put back in order, the company goes right back to messing things up again!)

Though fans may once again see Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson stand together, or see Barry Allen use the power of super speed to dazzle the bad guys, or cheer when Barbara Gordon rises above her meek disposition to become Batgirl, it will in all likelihood mean nothing in the long run. DC will use *Zero Hour* to tease us with memories from our childhood, when everything was simpler because we knew that the man behind the red cape would always be Clark Kent, the mild-mannered farm boy from Smallville, USA.

Ultimately, *Zero Hour* may be nothing more than business-as-usual for the company that killed America's greatest hero in order to stimulate sales



PREVIOUS PAGE: Batman and Robin meet Batgirl all over again in the pages of DC Comics' *Zero Hour*—while the original Robin, again a teenager, hovers overhead. ABOVE: The Flash dies—again!

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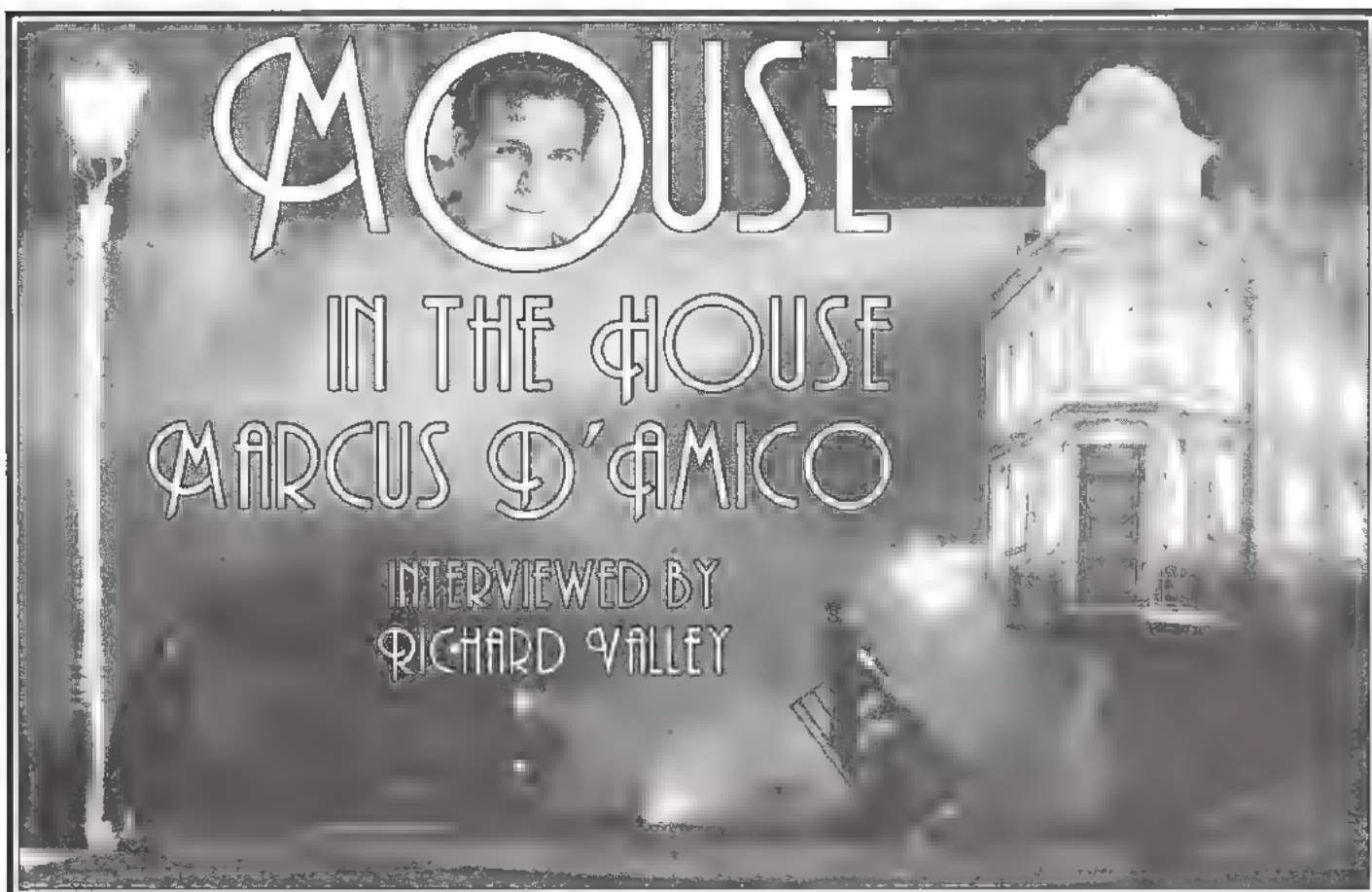
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A boy fiddles with a radio found in the rubble of a bombed-out English industrial town in the 1940s. Frustrated, the scruffy street urchin gives the mechanism a swift kick and gets astonishing results: stately, majestic, and (to Hitchcock fans) familiar music pours forth. Behind the lad, the curtain rises in time to the melody, revealing the rain-drenched Ian MacNeil set that has become the talk of Broadway. It is the beginning of *AN INSPECTOR CALLS*, director Stephen Daldry's brilliant rethinking of a play by J. B. Priestley. The show stars Rosemary Harris, Kenneth Cranham, and, as a caddish young alcoholic who impregnates a girl fired by his father, Marcus D'Amico.

A girl sits before a painting in a San Francisco museum in the 1970s. The camera approaches the girl, the painting, the flowers held by the woman in the painting. The movement is familiar (again, to Hitchcock fans)—and so is the music. It is a scene from *TALES OF THE CITY*, Alastair Reid's charming TV miniseries based on the book by Armistead Maupin. The show stars Olympia Dukakis, Bill Campbell, and, as a romantic young gay man searching for Mr. Right, Marcus D'Amico.

In both cases, the music has been lifted from Bernard Herrmann's haunting score for Alfred Hitchcock's *VERTIGO* (1958).

It's a musical coincidence that Marcus D'Amico finds amusing, as *Scarlet Street* discovered when we spoke with the actor between performances at New York's Royale Theatre. The actor's Broadway debut has been a great success and his vehicle the subject of some debate, much of it concerning the concept (Daldry lends the play's theme a timelessness by setting it simultaneously in 1912, the period of the action, and 1946, the period in which the play was first produced) and the dangers inherent in the staging (as the world of the Birlings comes tumbling down, their house literally tilts and spills its contents onto the street).

An articulate man as well as a talented actor (he was nominated for the Laurence Olivier Award for his performance in the London production of *ANGELS IN AMERICA*), Marcus D'Amico had a lot to say about *AN INSPECTOR CALLS*, *TALES OF THE CITY*, and one of his earliest motion-picture appearances (opposite some strange visitors from another planet) . . .

Scarlet Street: Do you have it in your contract that any production you do must contain music from *VERTIGO*?

Marcus D'Amico: You know, it's interesting that you'd pick up on that, because every night I'm giggling to myself about it. It's absolutely not my idea at all; it was Stephen Daldry's all the way back when he first originally did it in London. But it's great; I love it. It really psyches me up for the performance. I think it's extraordinary in *AN INSPECTOR CALLS*, but it was also very clever in *TALES OF THE CITY*.

SS: *AN INSPECTOR CALLS* is a radical restaging of a play that was originally a drawing-room drama. Did the staging influence the way you approached your character?

MD: Yes, absolutely. *AN INSPECTOR CALLS* is a concept piece. The only way you can approach that as an actor is to remain passive to the style. Because you're working in an atmosphere that's slightly heightened, with the set, with the rain, with the music, it's important that the first glimpse of the characters is larger than life. What you do from that point is slowly strip the character of

Continued on page 99

FLAUGHTY TELEVISION

BY DREW SULLIVAN
AND JESSIE GILLEY

Earth has been invaded by aliens—but that fact alone doesn't seem to carry much of a punch nowadays. For a select group of media-morality guardians, the real shocker is that these visitors from another world don't wear any clothes!

According to *New York Daily News* TV critic Eric Mink, the offending episode of NBC's *SEAQUEST DSV* gave rise to protests from self-appointed censors who hadn't even seen the program, but objected to the "nudity"—in actuality, actors in Rubber suits.

Wrote Mink in a May 8, 1994 column: "The supposed problem is scenes that reveal the lower parts of the aliens' naked bodies—front and rear. Thus, say the complainers, network television is again pushing nudity and immorality on an unsuspecting American public."

Oh, those sneaky network devils! The next thing you know they'll be telling us that cops swear, or that San Francisco has a really large gay population, or that . . .

But they've already told us that, haven't they, as watchers of ABC's *NYPD BLUE* and PBS' *TALES OF THE CITY* are well aware.

Still, such organizations as Reverend Donald E. Wildmon's American Family Association refuse to take such rare examples of adult programming lying down. In fact, AFA has taken full responsibility (credit, they call it) for PBS' decision not to run with a sequel to the highly-rated, critically-lauded *TALES*.

"PBS had never committed to nor announced a sequel to *TALES OF THE CITY*," says PBS spokesperson Harry Forbes. "We virtually acquired the first series from Channel 4—the total budget was \$8 million. Of that, PBS was only asked to put in a mere \$150,000. This time around, Channel 4 was looking to PBS to become a full partner, and when PBS looked at its programming priorities, it was decided that \$2 million was a lot to spend for something we have already done."

Armistead Maupin, author of the six *Tales of the City* books, isn't buying it. Says Maupin: "I'm outraged that PBS has capitulated to pressures from right-wing groups like that led by Wildmon, and have denied viewers a chance to see more of the most successful drama series PBS has run in the last 10 years."

TALES star Olympia Dukakis agrees wholeheartedly. Asked by *Scarlet Street* why she thinks PBS killed the sequel, Dukakis, the star of such films as *MOONSTRUCK* (1987) and *STEEL MAGNOLIAS* (1989), is succinct: "I believe it was from pressure from the right wing. They are intolerant and I abhor them."

At first, a sequel seemed inevitable. "The script was completed," Maupin recalls, "and we were hearing very positive noises from the national headquarters of PBS. I had every reason to believe that we'd be on location shooting again in October. Obviously, this decision was made by the new PBS president, Ervin S. Duggan, who is a Bush appointee to the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. Duggan is on record as saying he wants only 'decent family values' upheld on television—which means that he doesn't want to hear about any lifestyle other than that of Christian Fundamentalism."

It's been a busy season for the bluenose brigade. When *NYPD BLUE*, Steven Bochco's gritty new police drama, premiered last September, it had already won a top spot on the AFA hit list. Rumors of nudity (male and female) and dirty words ("tits" and "douche bag") had put the Association on edge. Wildmon spent the summer of 1993 sending AFA members

photos taken from preview tapes of *BLUE*'s steamier scenes. ("Look at the photos and make your own judgment," Wildmon advised, an opportunity he was not willing to grant the rest of the nation.)

Then came *TALES OF THE CITY* in January. A witty combo of comedy, soap opera, and mystery, *TALES*, like *BLUE*, was a major ratings success—and a major thorn in the side of the AFA.

Protests were loud and long, and were followed by PBS' announcement in April that it would not fund a sequel. That decision came as a surprise to England's Channel 4.

"It has almost killed the project," claims Ken Thompson, senior press officer at Channel 4, "because we have in the UK not a lot of money for shooting these things. Last time, PBS came in at the last minute. Now, they're not coming in. I don't understand their reasoning. *TALES* gave them the most astounding ratings they ever had!"

If PBS' withdrawal was a shock to Channel 4, so was the ruckus preceding it.

"We do not get those kinds of comments from viewers in this country," Thompson says. "I understand that some PBS stations objected to showing even the edited version, and we find that most depressing and most strange. Over here, if we don't like a show, we just turn it off."

Forbes is quick to defend PBS' stand. "It's been suggested that the campaign waged by Wildmon was influential in our decision. That's not so. *TALES*, for the most part, did very, very well. Stations reported back reactions to the series both negative and positive, but a



Photo Doug Hyun
Alien nudists attack on *SEAQUEST DSV*. NEXT PAGE: *NYPD BLUE* and *TALES OF THE CITY*.

lot of it was positive. It was the highest-rated dramatic series since 1989, when PBS began counting Nielsen ratings. But we don't make our programming decisions based on high ratings."

Member stations, however, want to see more of those numbers. In what almost amounts to a revolt, over 40 PBS affiliates have banded together to raise the cash necessary to get MORE TALES OF THE CITY on the air. PBS station KQED in San Francisco has led the campaign.

"We're trying to get a corporate sponsor for MORE TALES OF THE CITY," says Kevin Harris, director of programming at KQED. "We're still in negotiations. Most of the major market stations are very interested, and so the last piece of the funding pie will be money from public television stations. WGBH in Boston, WNET in New York, KCT in Los Angeles, KCTN in Seattle, WHYY in Philadelphia—they have given their support to the project. So, we're confident that if we're \$500,000 to a million out, we can bring that money together through public television stations."

Harris can't help but hint that, he, too, suspects PBS of knuckling under to pressure. "What I'm hoping to do, if we can pull together enough money, and if we can get corporate funds, is to go to PBS and say, 'Okay, now! Your share of the sequel will be close to that of the first series. Are you interested in airing it? Call the question, okay? Here is the most popular drama series ever on PBS. We have a corporate funder, a new one for public television. Now—what are you willing to do?' And then I think we will not have to second-guess them. It will depend on their answer."

From issued statements and interviews with *Scarlet Street*, PBS seems to be playing it both ways. On the one hand, they insist that their decision not to proceed with a sequel is wholly a budgetary one. On the other, they are unwilling to state that, should the monetary obstacle be removed, they will forge ahead. ("We'd consider it. I'm told we'd have to look at it first," is all that Forbes will say.)

The notion that PBS is running scared is strengthened by the fact that, last spring, its member stations were sent a list of possible responses to questions about

TALES—virtually all of which were parroted by Forbes in his talk with *Scarlet Street*. Examples:

Q: What was the response from the public to the series?

A: TALES drew much public response, both positive and negative.

Q: If TALES was so successful, why not fund another series?

A: We don't follow the commercial television model, where ratings success immediately spawns sequels and spin-offs.

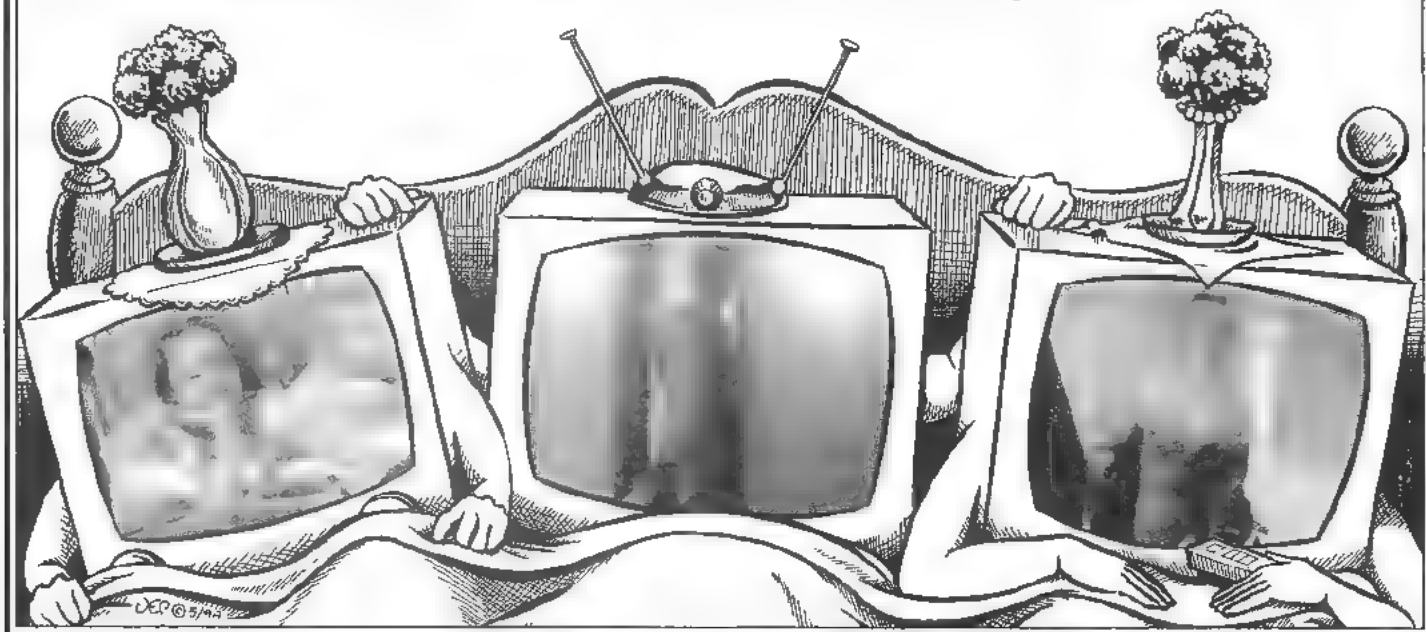
What PBS can't have foreseen is that the controversy refuses to die, as member stations scramble to raise funds, Channel 4 talks to various cable networks who have expressed an interest in continuing with the story, and Wildmon crows over his "triumph." For Armistead Maupin, who spent a decade trying to get a *Tales of the City* film off the ground before Channel 4 optioned it, the situation is especially frustrating:

"I've always thought of TALES OF THE CITY as a family program, because it encourages the kind of extended urban family that has given me strength over the years. I'm extremely proud of the fact that we attempted to cover everyone's life. I think that was its triumph, and that was its big offense in the eyes of many—incorporating gay people into the fabric of life itself for the first time. Often, gay programming is put in a box and issued with a warning label. TALES was subversive, because it told a story that involved everyone."

Translated to AFA-babble, that means "Your tax dollars used to air pornographic, profane, homosexual TV series."

"We assert very strongly that we do not consider TALES in any way, shape, or form to be pornographic," Forbes strongly asserts. "We didn't go into this blindly; we knew that there were themes that some people would find objectionable. That didn't stop us from airing it. Therefore, it just doesn't make sense that we would back off a proposed sequel for those reasons."

That's the crux of the matter, and an answer may be forthcoming. If member stations succeed in raising funds to present PBS with a proposal, and PBS still refuses to commit to a sequel, what other reasons exist?





LEFT: Marcus D'Amico poses beside the outsized lamppost that makes up part of the set for Broadway's *AN INSPECTOR CALLS*. The play was written by J. B. Preistley, familiar to Scarlet Streeters as the creator of *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932). **ABOVE:** *TALES OF THE CITY* boasted love scenes such as this one between Marcus D'Amico (as Michael "Mouse" Tolliver) and Rocketeer Bill Campbell (as Dr. Jon Fielden). **NEXT PAGE:** *SUPERMAN II* (1980).

MOUSE IN THE HOUSE

Continued from page 96

all his affectations, until you're left with a real person. Because it's a thriller, you also have to inform the audience about the character as quickly as possible, because the piece becomes involved with plot so quickly. It's very important to establish yourself, so that the audience can respond to you, can relate to you, when you're put through the interrogation by the inspector.

SS: *It looks dangerous on stage, what with the rain and the clutter after the house has collapsed.*

MD: *It is pretty dangerous. I cut my wrist at one point. There was something sharp on one of the set pieces, and during the struggle with the father, I cut my wrist. I didn't realize it at first, and then I noticed that the audience was staring at me as opposed to listening to the actors who were talking. I thought, "Well, I'm definitely not that good an actor; I know they're not interested in me just because I'm standing here." So I looked down and there was blood. I discreetly stepped off stage, and luckily the prop man used to be a medic. He wrapped it in bandages, and as soon as the curtain fell, I went to the hospital and had stitches.*

SS: *The theme of the play concerns man's responsibility for our fellow man. Several critics said that the theme was, at*

best, trite and outdated and, at worst, socialist and communist propaganda.

MD: *It's easy to dismiss those values as outdated, but they're very important. We have to start considering people besides ourselves. The 80s didn't work—we have a huge homeless problem, a huge starvation problem; there are people dying on the streets. It's time that we think about that and take some responsibility. I mean, it's wonderful that we seem to have gone through the therapy stage, with everyone deciding what it is that they want and need, personally. I think that's great, because ultimately it's healthy. But, at a certain point, we have to use that personal revelation to help other people. I don't find that value outdated at all, and that's all the play is saying. We don't live in these little houses. We are part of a community. Whether you call that propaganda or not, that's how the human species exists—as a community.*

SS: *The theme seems to hold personal importance to you.*

MD: *I feel very strongly about it. Almost all the projects I've been involved with in the last three years have said the same thing, that we need to communicate with each other, get along with each other, look after one another—and at the same time be true to ourselves, which is the most important thing. That's why*

I decided to do AN INSPECTOR CALLS—not because it was Broadway, but because I wanted to be involved with that experience, with actually saying that to people.

SS: *The theme holds true with the play ANGELS IN AMERICA.*

MD: *Absolutely. I played Louis in ANGELS IN AMERICA, and the reason I was so intrigued by the role is because it dealt with someone who physically didn't feel he was capable of seeing his lover through a sickness, and as a result lost himself and became this kind of barren driftwood. I'm talking emotionally. That's happening a lot these days, and the danger is that people turn to fundamentalism, to fundamental religion, which I am not party to at all. I don't think that's the answer. I don't think you need anything existential; it's all within you. Everyone has the ability to heal themselves and the people around them, metaphorically speaking.*

SS: *You played gay men in both ANGELS IN AMERICA and TALES OF THE CITY. Are you concerned about being typed?*

MD: *People are fearful of the mere mention of sexuality. It's difficult, as an actor, but I bit the bullet and took the plunge anyway, because ANGELS IN AMERICA had been such a remarkable experience. I was faced with the prospect that people would*



see me as an actor who played gay roles, and I was comfortable with it. When *TALES* came along, the general opinion was, "Well, you need to think about this carefully, because this can easily type you." I thought, "If that is gonna determine whether I have a career or not, then my career really isn't worth that much."

SS: Were you prepared for the controversy surrounding *TALES*?

MD: In England, there was no controversy. This is pretty much an Ameri-

can thing. The fact that two guys kissed, the nudity—that's all been seen long ago on British TV. There are people who didn't like *TALES* in England, and there are people who didn't like it here—but the difference seems to be that the people who didn't like *TALES* in England just switched it off, whereas here they've managed to exert some kind of censorship. That's a little worrying to me. If you don't want to watch *TALES*, then you have every right

to turn it off—but I don't think you have the right to decide whether or not someone else sees it. That really is kind of bullying. It's censorship, and I don't agree with censorship on anything.

SS: How did you become an actor?

MD: I started acting when I was 11, in *OLIVER!* Cameron MacIntosh was doing a production in the West End, and I auditioned along with 10,000 other kids and got the lead. It was great! I never made the decision to be an actor; I always was one.

SS: One of your earliest credits is *SUPERMAN II*.

MD: Yeah! Most of my part got edited out, actually, but there was a scene in which the three criminals from Krypton landed in this American farmland and killed my dad. I'd never been to America, and unfortunately they hadn't reminded me about my accent, so when it came time to film I was so nervous that I completely forgot to do an American accent! And they never dubbed it! In the middle of this American hick town, all of a sudden a little English boy comes forward and says, "Please put my daddy down." It's really kind of odd. (Laughs)

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◆ Movie Club #1 (not shown) *Jurassic Park* compared to 11 great dino movies of the past; Classic Horrors on video; sneak preview of *Regenerated Man*, a new indie sci-fi film; introduction to video and laser collecting and home theaters. More than 50 photos.

◆ Movie Club #2 (top, left): The Sci-Fi Channel—its best TV shows, movies and the channel's history, the best sassy and sexy "JD" movies, *The Fugitive* TV series and movie tribute to Vincent Price. More than 60 photos.

◆ Movie Club #3 (left). Unsung Gems (good movies you rarely read about); the forgotten "ape woman" movies; indie director Fred Olen Ray; *The Black Scorpion*. More than 50 photos.

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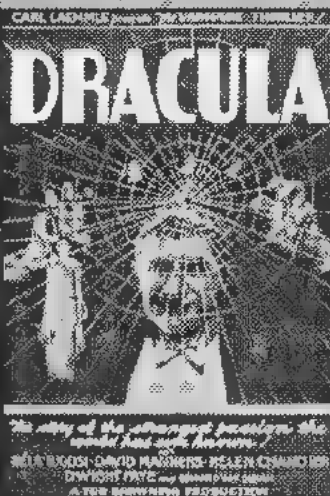
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Our Man on Baker Street

By David Stuart Davies

Street Scene

The Baker Street that one glimpses in the opening credits of *THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (and all the previous series) does not exist in that form any more. It has now been encased in a large metal building and functions as a set piece on the Granada Studios Tour. It is also available for hire as a venue for company presentations, parties, and various social gatherings. Indeed, I sampled some of what can be offered when Granada celebrated 10 years of the Sherlock Holmes series in April this year. The Street was very festive. There was a brass band playing Victorian melodies at one end of the thoroughfare, while very fetching ladies in revealing period costume, dodging the bruisers and urchins, offered mulled wine and nibbles. I enjoyed both! I was, for those brief few hours, glass in hand, scarlet hussy on my arm, living up to my sobriquet.

One understands the commercial element involved in this venture, but the broadening and glorifying of the Street has reduced rather than enhanced its magic. The ghosts of Brett, Hardwicke, Burke, Williams, and Jeavons do not, I think, walk there—not unless they want a hot dog from Mrs. Hudson's Hot Potato House!

The exterior scenes of Baker Street featured in *THE MEMOIRS* were shot in Liverpool. Remarkably, this great city still has streets which resemble the magical location "where it is always 1895." Keen-eyed viewers will be able to spot the moments when Holmes, Watson, or Mrs. Hudson

step from the set interior onto the real Liverpool street—appropriately dressed up with Hansoms and splendid extras of all class and costume, of course

Primed and Ready

PRIME SUSPECT continues to be a prime success story. The third in the series recently scored when it was shown in the States on the PBS series MYSTERY! Meanwhile, star Helen Mirren won a BAFTA Performance Award as Best Actress in a television series. (None other than Hercule Poirot himself, David Suchet, presented the award.)

Cracking the Morse Code

British Television companies are hard at it filming programmes to entertain us in the autumn and winter of this year. There are some welcome returns. After an on/off situation, David Suchet is at last back scratching his bald pate and twitching his fake moustache in a new series of POIROT. Robbie Coltrane is filming a new series of CRACKER for Granada. This is the show I raved about in *Scarlet Street* #13. It won a BAFTA award as the best new drama series, and I reckon it is really the one to watch. Coltrane has announced that he is wilder and more unpredictable in the new programmes.

After a reasonable response to the WYCLIFFE pilot (see *Scarlet Street* #12), a whole series is being filmed in Cornwall. WYCLIFFE is a MORSE clone. Just change the dreaming spires of Oxford for craggy cliffs and



Cornish cream teas and you've sussed it out. However, the TV company have not. Jack Shepherd, good actor though he may be, has not the charismatic clout of John Thaw. We'll see.

The series that I'm looking forward to seeing features Brother Cadfael. Derek Jacobi plays the sleuthing monk in this set of medieval mysteries based on the very successful books by Ellis Peters. The appeal lies in the novelty value of a holy man, rather like a celibate Lone Ranger, riding about the countryside righting wrongs, solving mysteries, and swigging the communion wine. No doubt it will look very pretty, but will it engage the interest? Obviously the Ye Olde Rustic English Setting has been chosen because of the appeal it is likely to have for American viewers... so I reckon you, my friends, will be the jury.

It was 12 years and an astonishing 41 programs ago that Granada's Baker Street set took form in Manchester. LEFT: As the set takes shape, a beaming Jeremy Brett prepares to embark on his historic stint as Sherlock Holmes, the world's first consulting detective. CENTER: 221B Baker Street rises from the mists of time. RIGHT: The reality of 20th-century England was blocked out by foliage placed at the end of the street.



Book Ends

The Scarlet Street Review of Books

KINGS OF THE JUNGLE:

David Fury

McFarland & Company, Inc., 1994

Box 611

Jefferson, NC 28640

\$37.50—256 pages

Subtitled "An Illustrated Reference to Tarzan On Screen and Television," *Kings of the Jungle* is a knowledgeable, detailed volume that is also very entertaining to read. Author David Fury offers an enthusiastic examination of the Ape-man, including excellent black-and-white photos from each and every production.

Maureen O'Sullivan, who lives forever in the memories of Tarzan fans for her portrayal of Jane in the Johnny Weissmuller series, starts off the book with a lovely foreword, recalling how she got the part. Her affection for Weissmuller still shows in this enjoyable essay.

Fury wisely introduces the reader to the man who created the whole Tarzan legend: Edgar Rice Burroughs. The spirit of ERB (as Fury refers to him) is felt throughout this fine book, as Fury recounts the reaction of the master writer to some of the earliest Tarzan film productions. Though he hated the idea that Weissmuller's Tarzan spoke broken English—quite unlike the educated noble savage of the novels—Burroughs greatly admired the first Weissmuller film, *TARZAN, THE APE MAN* (1932).

Fury also points out a fact that many fans may not be aware of: that Burroughs was directly involved with two independent Tarzan features, *THE NEW ADVENTURES OF TARZAN* (1935) and *TARZAN AND THE GREEN GODDESS* (1938). Both films starred Herman Brix, who, ironically, lost out to Johnny Weissmuller for the role of The Lord Of the Jungle in the MGM productions.

The author does an excellent job examining each and every Tarzan film, dividing the films into three sections: *THE SILENT ERA TARZANS*, *THE JOHNNY WEISSMULLER ERA*, and *MORE HEROIC TARZANS: 1933 TO THE PRESENT*. A synopsis of each movie is followed by background material. Cast and crew credits are also presented for every title.

There is even a special section at the end, chronicling Tarzan TV shows and movies, making this a comprehensive volume that will be valuable as a research tool for film buffs. For Tarzan fans, *Kings of the Jungle* is a must.

—Sean Farrell

HISPANIC HOLLYWOOD

George Hadley-Garcia

Citadel Press, 1993

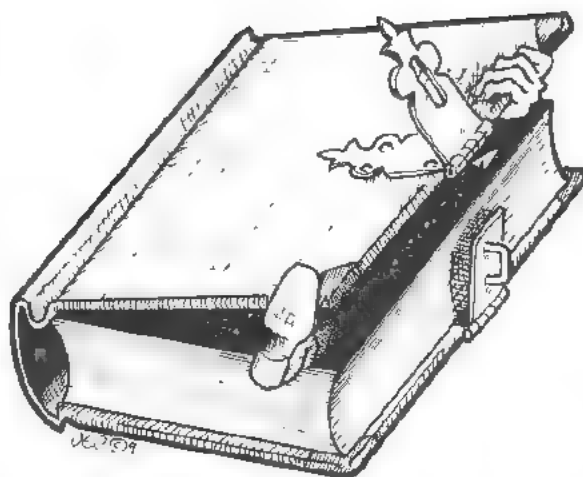
256 pages—\$16.95

(Also available in a Spanish language edition.)

While there have been other books written on the subject of the representation and treatment of the Hispanic culture in popular entertainment, George Hadley-Garcia's *Hispanic Hollywood* makes its point with just the right amount of text, a wealth of well-reproduced stills, and a wry sense of humor throughout. This trade-size paperback welcomes the casual cinema buff with its colorful, breezy cover and inside layout, yet there is enough meat in Hadley-Garcia's prose to satisfy the more serious-minded film student.

The late actress Dolores Del Rio invites us in with a brief foreword, followed by a harder-hitting "appreciation" by present-day actor Edward James Olmos, in which he comments on the state of the industry and its treatment of Hispanics today. Hadley-Garcia's introduction follows, after which he plops us down in the Hollywood of the silent age, where bandits, shiftless workers, seductive temptresses, and Latin gigolos abounded. There was even a series of "greaser" films, prompting the Mexican government (in 1919) to formally complain and suggest a ban on all movies produced by the offending studios.

Hadley-Garcia next ushers us into the sound era of the 30s and 40s (spotlighting the films and careers of such well-known talents as Cesar Romero, Gilbert Roland, Lupe Velez, Carmen Miranda, Maria Montez, and Anthony Quinn) and continues right on up to the present day, always pro-



viding interesting tidbits (director John Huston and his *TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE* crew were banned by Mexico's Department of the Interior from filming in run-down areas of the country due to negative and misleading portrayals) and bitter-sweet asides (on the TV series *RAW-HIDE*, a secondary character named Jesus was phonetically spelled "Hey Soos" in the credits).

If there is any fault to be found with the book, it is in the use of stills. While abundant and nicely reproduced, the placement of each photo is haphazard. It would have been much more useful if, for example, stills from *THE ALAMO* (1960) had been used next to the text in which the author discusses that John Wayne movie (as opposed to the ones that were used, i.e. 1968's *GUNS FOR SAN SEBASTIAN* and 1967's *A COVENANT WITH DEATH*). This procedure is common on most pages of the book. Also, the author's obvious admiration for actress Dolores Del Rio is readily apparent in his use of nearly 50 photos of her throughout the book's pages (plus some 30 mentions in the text). Still, these are minor quibbles.

All in all, *Hispanic Hollywood* is a subject that needed to be addressed and the book succeeds in its goals. It is an informative, enjoyable read, and a more-than-welcome addition to any cinephile's bookshelf.

—Randy Vest

DRACULA: THE VAMPIRE LEGEND ON FILM

Robert Marrero

Fantasma Books, 1992

120 pages—\$12.95

Direct from Key West, Florida, here's another small-press book filled

with pix from everyone's favorite (and not so favorite) vampire flicks—so many photographs, in fact, that *Dracula: The Vampire Legend on Film* qualifies as a pictorial history. Herein you'll find those old standbys, the vampire movies of Universal and Hammer, but you'll also get a look at such often (and sometimes justly) neglected efforts as *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* (1958), *BILLY THE KID VS. DRACULA* (1966), *BLACULA* (1971), *FRIGHT NIGHT* (1985), and *GRAVEYARD SHIFT* (1987).

Author Robert Marrero's heart is in the right place (even if his syntax sometimes is not), and this book has a pleasant fanzine quality to it. The photo repro is good, as is the choice of photos. If the vamp you love best made his screen debut between 1922 and 1992, you'll likely discover him (or her) on these pages.

—Danny Savello

HOLLYWOOD CAULDRON

Gregory William Mank
McFarland & Co., 1993
384 pages—\$37.50

It's one of fandom's facts of life that any history of the Hollywood horror movie of the 30s and 40s must face a

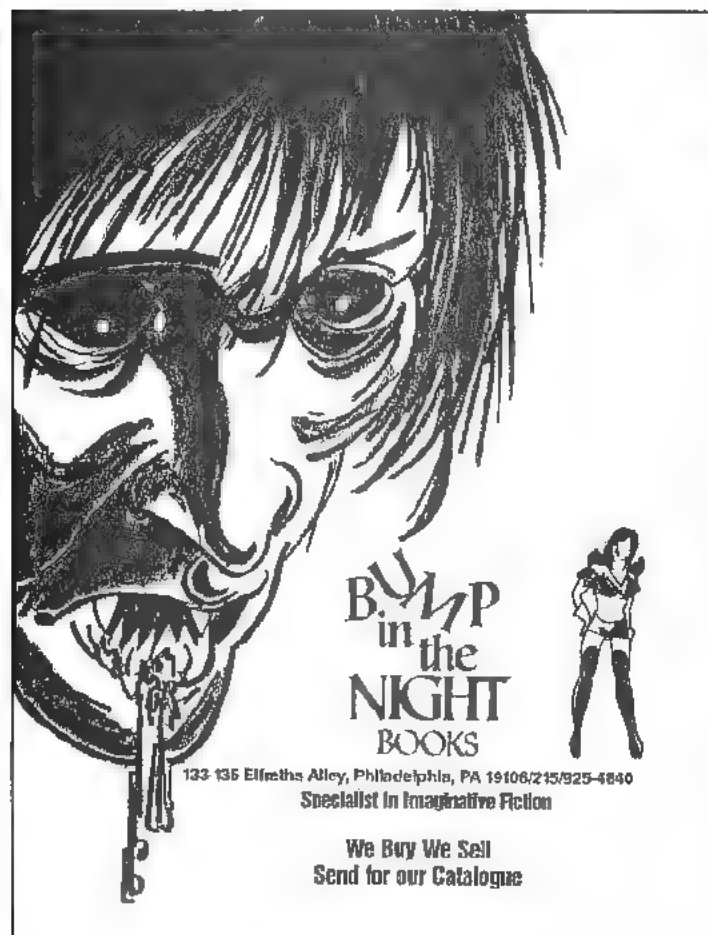
daunting comparison with the voluminous output of Gregory Mank. Since the publication of *"It's Alive!"* (A. S. Barnes, 1981), the mesmerizing saga of Universal's *Frankenstein* series, Mank has staked claim to the so-called Golden Age, etching its players, directors, and writers as vividly (if much more truthfully) as any practitioner of fiction. In *Hollywood Cauldron*, the writer plays "catch up" with 13 chillers which have escaped his study, including such bonafide classics as *DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE* (1931), *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932), and *CAT PEOPLE* (1941), as well as such undervalued gems as *THE BLACK ROOM* (1935), *HANGOVER SQUARE* (1945), and *BEDLAM* (1946). It's a predictably impressive job, as warmly reverential in tone as it is critically discerning.

This latest offering finds Mank sticking to his tried-and-true formula. Fusing the scrappy raw data of press clippings, interview quotes, and production files, filling it out with a dash of educated guesswork, and embellishing it with his well-honed literary gifts, Mank scrupulously reconstructs the creation of these films, charting, as it were, the drama within the drama. Mank

proves his unflinching eye for detail is second to none, as his pen artfully catches the essence of each film in all its Gothic grandeur, as well as the quirky personalities of each film's creators. It's no small testament to the writer's ability that, even when trotting out plot synopses of the most painfully familiar movies, the book is a consistently engrossing read.

But even the most devoted Mank follower would have to admit that the writer's scope, which barely spans two decades, is a narrow one. As respected as he is, there have been some rumblings that the author has drawn from the same well too often; his overused tag for James Whale as "the cheroot-smoking 'ace' of Universal studios," for example, is fast slipping into self-parody. The material at times creaks with excessive padding (why else would an account of the suicide of Jean Harlow's husband, Paul Bern, be inexplicably dredged up in a chapter on *THE MASK OF FU MANCHU*?) More than occasionally does the reader sample Mank's penchant for recycling the same research, giving the book a slight pall of familiarity.

Be that as it may, there's more than enough tantalizing new information

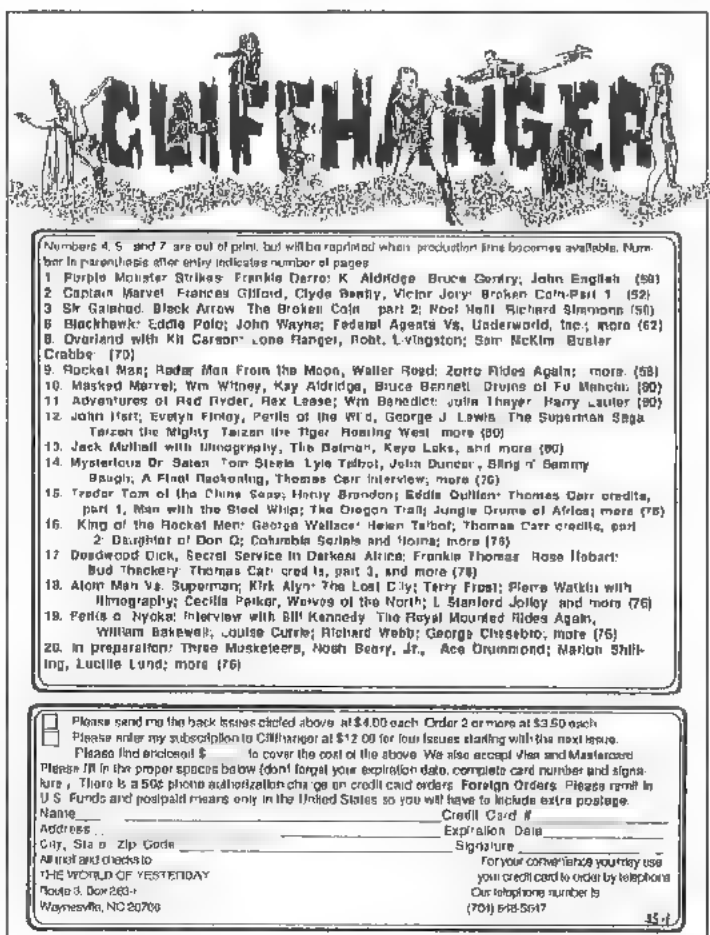


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to make *Hollywood Cauldron* irresistible—the bizarre early script drafts of *THE WALKING DEAD* (1936) that provoked Karloff's ire, the behind-the-scenes pandemonium that rocked the production of the aforementioned Fu Manchu adventure, Shirley Ulmer's blithe memories of husband Edgar and John Carradine between takes on the 1944 Poverty Row masterpiece, *BLUEBEARD*, and so on. Mank, who usually eschews long-winded critical commentary, ventures more decisively into the arena of film analysis than in previous encounters; another distinct plus.

Overall, *Hollywood Cauldron* is an exemplary exercise in film writing, as well as in horror scholarship. It's the sort of undertaking that deserves to be supported . . . and treasured.

—Michael Brunas

HOLLYWOOD, BABBLE ON

Boze Hadleigh

Birch Lane Press, 1994

278 pages—\$19.95

This is surely the first all-gossip book, and not to be confused with Kenneth Anger's *Hollywood Babylon*, even though both books leave the reader with a slightly guilty but distinctly pleasant feeling. *Hollywood, Babble On* is 100% stellar gossip, for every quote in this collection is one star talking about another star.

It's amazing what some stars have publicly stated about their colleagues. *Hollywood, Babble On* will surprise, titillate, and provoke into laughter most any reader who is a star-gazer or movie buff. The quotes here (all of which have previously appeared in print in books, magazines, or newspapers) are a red-hot bunch; according to editor Boze Hadleigh, this is the cream of 16 years of collecting quotes.

Conveniently, there is an index, so you can look up a star and see what he or she has to say. (Some of the more big-mouthed or tart-tongued include Bette Davis, Robert Mitchum, Boy George, and Humphrey Bogart.) Unfortunately, the index does not indicate the subjects of the verbal barbs, and you'll be surprised who talks about whom (i.e., Mitchum on Noel Coward, Carroll Baker on Raquel Welch, Dietrich on Madonna).

Hollywood, Babble On would seem an ideal target for lawsuits, were it not a collection of already-uttered tongue lashings. The impact of the book is that roughly 1000 quotes are collected here in one volume.

The book also includes 48 photos, some of them exceedingly rare and

some very humorous—in particular, a shot of the young Ronald Reagan posing in his trunks for an art class. (Said Republican Lillian Gish: "Even then, he had thick hips and a narrow mind.")

Some of the quotes are stinging one-liners, others are a paragraph or two, but they invariably amuse, amaze, or move the reader to howls of disbelieving mirth. *Hollywood, Babble On* is a book best read with your eyebrows raised.

—George Lyndon

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THE DUENDE HISTORY OF THE SHADOW MAGAZINE

Will Murray

Odyssey Publications, 1984

128 pages—\$24.95

The Duende History of The Shadow Magazine, which served as the official source book used by Universal for their brand-new production of *THE SHADOW*, has been re-released by Black Orchid Books, and it is an absolute must-have for fans of this dark avenger, his friends, his foes . . .

The book is filled with wonders to delight the hearts of Shadow followers, including page after page of covers from *The Shadow Magazine*, a history of The Shadow's fire opal ring, a last talk with Shadow creator Walter B. Gibson (whose stories were, of course, published under the pseudonym Maxwell Grant), and—wonder of wonders—the first publication of "Blackmail Bay," the last Shadow story penned by Gibson.

Whether or not this turns out to be the Summer of The Shadow, this is a book worth lighting upon.

Danny Savello

THE FILMS OF REGINALD LE BORG

Wheeler Winston Dixon

Scarecrow Press, 1992

175 pages—\$25

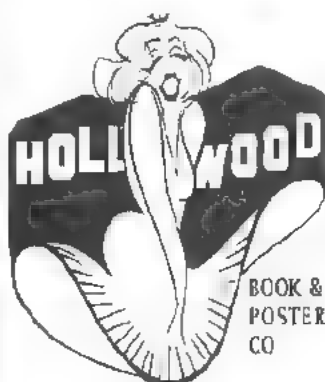
Reginald LeBorg can't claim credit for directing a single top-drawer horror movie in his 40-year career. His work in the genre in the 40s (*THE MUMMY'S GHOST*, 1944) ran a distant second to the Val Lewton pictures, his 50s shockers (*THE BLACK SLEEP*, 1956) didn't make the same splash that Hammer films were about to, and *DIARY OF A MAD MAN* (1964) was strictly warmed-over Roger Corman. Nevertheless, Hollywood, which can never overcome its typecasting ways, saw him as a Gothic specialist. Typically, LeBorg found himself with better casts than scripts and probably holds the record for directing more horror superstars than anyone in the business.

In the last years of a lifetime of relative obscurity, LeBorg (who died in 1989) unexpectedly found himself the center of attention of an army of horror fans and writers. (I sheepishly admit to being one of them.) We arrived on his doorstep, notebooks in hand, hoping to record his reminiscences for posterity. The director may have preferred musicals to monsters, but always treated us graciously as he recalled trying to curb the theatrical excesses of Price and Carradine and soothe the inner demons of Lugosi and Chaney, Jr., or merely reflected on the quiet gentility of Rathbone and Karloff.

This addition to Scarecrow's Filmmaker series devotes a good half of its length to raw, barely-edited transcripts of conversations with LeBorg. Unfortunately, the interview sessions, conducted before an audience of college students, don't yield nearly as much substance as those done in a more intimate environment. It's nice that the director has finally gone on record with his rarely mentioned nonhorror output, but his responses are sketchy at best and disappointingly short on anecdotes.

The book is supplemented with a detailed filmography, two essays by the director, and a rundown of his unrealized projects. The most notable item is Winston Wheeler Dixon's incisive, if fulsome, 39-page career wrap-up in which the author professes a disarmingly enthusiastic defense of Universal's much-lambasted Inner Sanctum series. I like a critic with guts.

Michael Brunas



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Acquanetta goes ape in this rare shot
from CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN (1943).

ACQUANETTA

Continued from page 75

ed that to a degree. In fact, that's why I
left Universal. It makes me emotional
even now, because I would have liked
to have stayed and made more pic-
tures—but when I thought what one
had to do for that, I walked away. I
went to Mexico, and met beautiful
people there; I went at the request of

President Roosevelt, as a goodwill
ambassador. They said, "If you come
to Mexico and learn Spanish, we'll
put you in films here." That's really
why I walked out on Universal, and
got into my Oldsmobile and drove to
Mexico City. After I was in Mexico for
a short time, I met a Russian gentle-
man named Luciano Baschuk. He
asked for my hand, and we were mar-
ried. I gave up films for the time be-
ing, and then I came back to the
United States. I had a little boy, and
then my little boy got cancer and
died. And I didn't go back to Mexico.
SS: How old was he when he died?

A: He was not quite five. Sergei, his
name was. Beautiful child. He looked
like an angel from the day he was
born. He was very, very pale, with big
blue eyes and blonde hair. And from
the time that he could talk, he was
wise like an old, old man. It's incredi-
ble that some children are born like
that.

SS: You had a small part in FLESH AND
FANTASY at Universal, didn't you?

A: That was because of Charles
Boyer. He met me and liked me. He
was a nice man, too. There were a lot of
them that were nice, but they wanted
more than just to be friends. That
stops a lot of careers—in and out of
Hollywood, I must say.

SS: Any regret about roads not taken?

A: My life is almost like a fairy tale
in that things came to me; I never
sought any of it—even my marriages.
I was married for 25 years to Jack
Ross, and had four beautiful sons.
They are all very successful and
lovely. It was an accidental meeting.
I was in a doctor's office, and there I
met one of the wealthiest women in
the world, and Jack Ross was working
for her and her husband. She invited
me to a Christmas party, and sent
him to pick me up. So I met Jack Ross,
and he decided to pursue me. He
would come every day and leave
gifts at my door. Every day.

SS: Very romantic.

A: Even if it was a sandwich, he
brought it every day. (Laughs)

SS: You told us earlier that you're an
auctioneer . . .

A: Well, when I was in Phoenix, I went
to a charitable auction one day. They
asked me if I would go up on stage
and conduct it. So I went on stage,
and instantly I became an auctioneer!

SS: That's great! From gorilla to leopard
woman to auctioneer!

A: Well, being an actress, I'll attempt
anything! Hanging from a high wire!
(Laughs) I've had a wonderful life!



THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE (1962) was one of director Val Guest's most effective forays into the field of science-fiction. The film starred Edward Judd (right, near sign) as a *Daily Express* reporter.

GUEST

Continued from page 33

the road, cars on the sidewalk left derelict—we had to do all that to make it look like the day before the end of the world. To do that in one of the busiest bloody streets in the world is not easy. So we planned it, and I must say the police were wonderful. It was easy enough to get buildings to let us board 'em up—this was a Sunday—and to let us paste stuff on window panes to make 'em look cracked. What I told the police was, "I want no traffic; I want no cars parked on Fleet Street all the way from the *Express* office up to the law courts"—which has got to be a mile. They said, "We will have that street like that for you for three minutes at a time." They put "No Parking" signs all the way down, on both sides of the street—on stands which could be kicked over. So there was nobody parked at all, except our "dead" vehicles. We rehearsed everything with all the traffic and the busses and everything going—we rehearsed it absolutely up to the time we had to shoot. Then we said to the two cops that we were ready to go. They were both on motorcycles, one on each side of the street. They blew a whistle,

which stopped everything at the top. Then they drove off up Fleet Street, hell for leather, kicking these "No Parking" signs down so that you couldn't see them; they were all flat on the ground. Following them was our prop truck, with the back down, and three prop men in the back with shovels shoveling all the crap into the road that they could get in. And the moment they disappeared 'round the corner at the top, I said, "Action!" We had two-and-a-half minutes by then. And we got our scenes that way. The instant that the time was up, the police let the traffic through again.

SS: *The big action scene in the movie is the water riot.*

VG: We staged the entire thing in the studio. I remember that an agent called me one day and said, "Look, there's an awfully nice actor who needs a job and has got to pay his rent. He's a good actor and can you give him a bit when you do your water riot?" I said okay. He arrived, we paid him something like £25—and it was Michael Caine. So Michael was in all those riot scenes, too, but he was only there for a day, day and a half—something like that.

SS: *Did you stage the film's peace demonstration, or just take advantage of a real one?*

VG: We did take advantage of a real one, and then we went on another Sunday, when there was nothing happening, with our own little bit of crowd, for closeups. We matched all the wardrobe off the people who had been there before. Very much the same way as I used newsreel shots of floods and riots, and "rebuilt" tiny pieces of those scenes in a studio with people with the same umbrellas and the same whatevers. It sounds awful to say this, but I did what Oliver Stone did in *JFK!* (Laughs)

SS: *Speaking of Kennedy, wasn't he quite taken with the film?*

VG: John Kennedy asked for his own copy, and he screened it for 200 foreign correspondents in Washington. They asked if I could talk Arthur Christiansen, who was editor at the *Daily Express* and who played himself in the film, into going over and speaking to them. Chris went over, but I couldn't—I wish I could have gone, but I was busy on another film at the time. Christiansen was a legendary character in Fleet Street. Half the people who saw the film said, "Oh, he's awful," and the other half said, "What an unusual performance!" (Laughs) Poor Chris, we had a terrible time with him, because he wasn't an actor and he couldn't remember his

lines. I had to do some terrific cutting in that office, when he's talking to the reporters. But a lot of people thought it came off as being an unusual character. Yolande always says, "Oh, you ruined it, putting him in!"

SS: Did he get much help or advice from the professional actors?

VG: I can only tell you that Edward Judd was a real horror with him. Judd didn't help at all; in fact, he kept saying, "Oh, shit," and walking out. That doesn't help a guy when he's forgetting his lines. But that was Eddie Judd. I'm afraid. Eddie was very good and DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE was his big break. It got him a contract with Columbia, but he was such a pain in the ass to everybody. He had an enormous opinion of himself, and he was his own worst enemy. Columbia just loaned him out here and there and then let him go.

SS: Good actor, though

VG: Very good. Well, I put him in there because I'd seen him in a TV thing and I thought he had enormous talent. I thought, what an unusual type to use and launch off.

SS: Any special memories of leading lady Janet Munro?

VG: I always knew Janet as a very good little performer, and she had just finished her contract with Disney. She kept saying to me, "Oh, I want to grow up. I don't want to do Disney. I want to do a grown-up part." I said, "Well, this'll do it for you." And she said, "You've got to tell me how to grow up, and put it on that screen." In the Disney movies, they used to make her tie her boobs down, to make it look like she had none. We got those out, to start with! (Laughs) She had a very tragic end.

SS: What was the weather really like while you filmed your actors "boiling in the heat"?

VG: I can tell you that on the day we shot in Battersea Park, with everybody sun bathing, it was about 58, 60 degrees at the most. Everybody was freezing—in bikinis! We told them to keep their coats on until we were ready to shoot. That whole scene of Janet and Eddie Judd on the grass—it was very cold weather. On the other stuff, Fleet Street and things like that, it wasn't all that cold, but in the scene where it was supposed to be the hottest day of the century, it was a very cold day!

SS: What can you tell us about shooting the fog effects?

VG: The day that we did all that fog in Battersea Park, we had every fog machine we could get 'round this

vast park on the Thames. We had all these machines going, hundreds of extras—the whole idea was that this strange mist was coming up the Thames and covering the whole of London. When we were very near the end of the shooting, we were suddenly invaded by three police cars; the cops came up and said, "You must stop this immediately!" What was happening was, just the other side of the Thames was the Chelsea Flower Show, which the Queen was opening. And they had all this fog, pouring all over Her Majesty! (Laughs) The policemen said, "You have no right to do this! You didn't say anything about all this fog!" So I said to my assistants, "Go and argue with them. Keep 'em arguing as long as you can." They argued with the cops, and really had a high, heated argument, while we got on with what we had left. Finally I came out and said, "Well, all right, okay, we're sorry. We'll stop." But, of course, we had finished by then!

SS: Did you have anything to do with the yellow tinting of the opening and closing scenes?

VG: Yes, that was my idea; it was written in the script. I fought against making the movie in color. I didn't want color; I thought color would kill it. But, I thought, what a difference we could make if, when the world is near its end, it is so hot that everything is this yellow shimmer. I thought that, if we could do the beginning and the end like that, it would make a difference. They had terrible trouble doing it, because at that time, it was not all that easy to cut from color to black-and-white in a strip. They had to hand-tint the beginning and the end, and it became so expensive—we're talking about worldwide prints—that a lot of times they left it out.

SS: The film's unresolved ending was also terrific.

VG: It was a terrible battle, getting them to agree to let me do that. I said, "You'll defeat the whole object of this film," and finally they let me do it—but then they said, "Well, can we have angels singing or something?" (Laughs) I said I'd go that far, yes.

SS: It was church bells, which seemed to be hinting . . .

VG: That maybe it was all right. But I refused to say "yes, it was" or "no, it wasn't." I said, "All right, we'll give 'em a little feeling that maybe . . ."

SS: Were you happy with the effects?

VG: Yes. I mean, I can look at them and say, "Well, I'd have liked to have done this or that," but for what it was

at that time, I thought Les Bowie did a very good job.

SS: You wrote in *Films and Filming* that you've never been happy with a picture once it was finished

VG: Actually, that's not a complete quote. What I said was, I've never been completely happy with any film we ever made because you always see so many other things you could have done. Which is quite normal, and doesn't mean that I'm unhappy with a film. The day you sit at a film and think, "I could never have done anything better," I think you've had it.

SS: Did the positive reviews for DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE help your career?

VG: It would be nice to say yes, but I don't think so, no. I have gone through a career where, occasionally, we've had a great big hit and wonderful press and you think, "Ah, now it's going to be easy." But it's not. All it does is that, for the next film, you can get in to see who you want to get in to see. It opens doors, but it doesn't make it any easier for you to make the pictures you want to make.

SS: Do you have a favorite story about making CASINO ROYALE?

VG: I could write a book on CASINO ROYALE! It was an unbelievable experience! I went on it under contract for eight weeks, and I was still under contract nine months later! [Producer] Charlie Feldman was a madman. There were days when you loved him and could hug him, and then other days you could throttle him! An extraordinary man, who would change his mind overnight—during the night, mostly—and call you at all hours. They had bought *Casino Royale*, which was a Bond book, but when they went through it, they found that every single sequence in that book had been used in the other Bond pictures. This was the only book that had "gotten away," the only one "Cubby" Broccoli and Harry Saltzman didn't have. But they had used all the bits out of it, including the card game!

SS: You directed Woody Allen's segment of the film.

VG: Oh, yes—Woody and I sat down and wrote it together. Then we took it over to Charlie Feldman, who would go through it and send it back with all the gags cut out, having left all the buildups! (Laughs) Woody would be in tears; Woody'd say, "How can a guy do this?" I'd say, "Look, don't worry about it. Let him think he's cutting something. We can put 'em back when we shoot"—which is ex-

actly what we did. Woody has less confidence than anybody you would ever meet; you wouldn't think that, but it's so. You have to hold his hand. SS: Did you work with the other CASINO ROYALE directors?

VG: Only to say, "Hey, don't use such and-such a star Wednesday, 'cause I need her!" It was a very strange setup. At the beginning, it was just John Huston and me. One day, John said to me, "Is Feldman as mad as I think he is?" I said, "Oh, he's madder!" Huston said, "He's talking now about having a compendium of directors." I didn't know that. (Laughs) "Oh, yes, it's not just us! There's a compendium coming along!" Then Charlie said he wanted a compendium of stars as well—a lot of stars, different segments, and a compendium of directors. He gave me a script by Terry Sothorn, a script by Ben Hecht, a script by Richard Maibaum—and he said, "Take all these away and see if you can get one out of 'em." It was an impossible job. I ended up working on the film to the extent that Charlie said, "You've done so much on this, I'm going to give you a credit of your own: coordinating director: Val Guest." I said, "If you do that, I'll sue you." 'Cause people were going to say, "This is coordinated?" (Laughs)

SS: Orson Welles was among the stars. What did he think of all this?

VG: Orson Welles and Peter Sellers could not get on. Orson Welles said one day, "Call me when that fucking amateur has finished." That gives you an idea of how they got on.

SS: Was CASINO ROYALE your worst filmmaking experience?

VG: Oh, no, not worst; I wouldn't say that. We had a lot of fun on it, and it taught you how to keep your head when all about you are losing theirs. (Laughs) You have to be resilient.

SS: Do you remember how you got involved on Hammer's WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH?

VG: It was a sorry day and I do remember it! (Laughs) A lady called Aida Young was the producer; she used to be the production manager's assistant-cum-everything at Hammer. Aida called at our little holiday pad in Malta and said, "Jimmy Carreras wants to do another dinosaur film." She brought over a few sheets of paper with ideas that matched up with the poster he'd sent to Hollywood. I thought it might be fun; I'd never done anything like that, so why not? I sat down and wrote a story. That's how I got involved; it was as easy as that. I was hoping we could do it in

Malta; then I could stay at my pad there and everything. But there were no mountains anywhere near, and that didn't help! Maybe I'm not very good at working with a woman producer. (Laughs) We didn't get on. After it was over, I was in on the editing, working with our editors as I always do, and then I went onto another film and got on with my life. Then the editor called and said, "I don't like to tell you this, guv, but . . ." Aida Young had re-edited the whole picture! But, what the hell, it's not as though we're talking about CITIZEN KANE! I don't honestly know how it ended up, because I was too fed up with the whole thing to go and see it. I don't have much else to say about that,

Photo courtesy of Dikla Klement



Val Guest directs John Crawford in Hammer's HELL IS A CITY (1960).

except I loved the animator, Jimmy Danforth—who I also believe was very unhappy with the film. But I thought we did rather well by him.

SS: Was he unhappy while the movie was being made, or after it had been screwed up?

VG: Well, I don't think it did get "screwed up" for him; in fact, he was nominated for an Academy Award for that picture! Brilliant little man. Whether he wanted to have more to say in the film or what his complaint was, I don't know.

SS: What else can you tell us about the film?

VG: It wasn't a very scintillating company. As our star, we had a bimbo called Victoria Vetri, who was Miss Playboy or Miss Centerfold or something like that. She was a real nothing, and a very strange, mixed-up lady, too. The rest of the cast were

people I knew, like Pat Holt and Robin Hawdon—in fact, Robin Hawdon, who played the juvenile, played the office boy who died in DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE. He went on to become quite a good playwright.

SS: Did Vetri give you a hard time?

VG: She never gave me a hard time; the only tough time was taking her. It was tough to take her. She was a nitwit.

SS: Were prehistoric stories even your cup of tea?

VG: No—but like I said, I did it because I'd never done one, and I wanted to try it. And, let me tell you, had I done that with Mike Carreras or even Tony Hinds, it would have been an entirely different picture. Absolutely. I would have gone in and said, "All right, let's try and get another angle on this—we've seen Raquel Welch. Now let's try and do something strange." But I couldn't; it was just sort of another ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.

SS: You've been working on a remake of DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE, haven't you?

VG: Winchester Films of England came to me about my proposed remake, and they had an idea of how to update it. I was very impressed, and I said I'd go along with them. At that time, I had Paramount, Warners, and 20th Century Fox vying for it—all of them suddenly decided they wanted to remake the film! But it's much too nice down here in Palm Springs for me to be up there arguing, so I leave this all to Winchester. We've done the first-draft script, and brought it up to date. I don't want to say too much about what we've done, but it looks like we were slightly ahead of our time, because global warming is to day a real concern.

SS: You'll be directing?

VG: Oh, no, no—I'm done with all that now. I've co-rewritten, and I'm coproducing.

SS: Any closing comments? Proudest moments? Regrets?

VG: Well, we've all got regrets about this, that, and the other—but, yes, I'm happy. I think life has been very good to me. I think maybe I could have done more, and better, but I don't complain. I've had a very full life and a very interesting life. Somebody up there has been very good to me.

Tom Weaver is the author of *Attack of the Monster Movie Makers* (McFarland, 1994). He also writes for Fangoria. Richard Scrivani is a staff writer for Scarlet Street.

HAMMETT

Continued from page 62

turned-novelist, published *Hammett*, a novel that cleverly blended fact and fiction. "I wanted to paint a fictionalized, yet honest portrait of the man who created an authentic and original voice in American literature," Gores said.

That book was followed by *JULIA*, the 1977 film based on one of Hellman's memoirs. Jason Robards won an Oscar playing Hammett to Jane Fonda's Hellman.

"I've played a lot of writers and been associated with several writers who have a dark side: Eugene O'Neill, Mark Twain, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and, of course, Dashiell Hammett," Robards said. "I imagine there is some kind of insight that gets built up in the subconscious from playing these types. There must be some type of residual effect. These parts tend to stir up the subconscious and you say, 'Yes, I know this man.' But I don't know if I'd actually call that preparing. I'm not a method actor. I wasn't trained that way. Whatever works, I suppose, but I don't go for that."

"So I didn't tear myself to pieces playing Dashiell Hammett. I suppose there were similarities between Hammett and me, but I don't dwell much on that kind of thing. That can put a dent in the imagination, and we are, after all, primarily in the imagination business. You can't get too far away from it being make-believe. If you don't have the words, you can't play it. In that case, the words were there, so it was a pleasure reacting to the situations Hammett was put in."

A year after *JULIA*, CBS aired a miniseries version of *The Dain Curse*, the only Hammett novel not made into a movie. The detective hero, however, was not the Op. He was a tall, thin man named Hamilton Nash. And James Coburn was made up to look like Dashiell Hammett.

"It was supposed to be Hammett," Coburn confirmed. "We called him Hamilton Nash in case anyone missed the point. I enjoyed making it. We shot most of it on Shelter Island in New York, which helped catch the mood of the 20s. But we were hampered by the budget. We didn't have enough money to do all the things in a realistic way. Still, I thought a lot of it worked."

The Hammett revival was in full force. In 1982, PBS aired *THE CASE OF DASHIELL HAMMETT*, a documentary produced by San Francisco station KOED (narrated by Paul Frees and Lyle Talbot). In 1983, director Wim

Wenders' film version of Gores' *Hammett* was released. Frederic Forrest had the title role. Peter Boyle played the Op-like Jimmy Ryan.

Although the film received mostly good reviews, it was a troubled production taken out of Wenders' hands and reportedly reshot by executive producer Francis Ford Coppola.

"Sure, there were plenty of problems on the film," Boyle said, "but, personally, I liked working with Wim Wenders a lot. He's a very soulful guy, very introverted. He's a beautiful guy. The project was crazy, though, and there's a whole book in the making of that film. I don't even know the whole story, and I was there. We filmed one version; then, two weeks before completion, the plug was pulled. It was rewritten and refilmed with a whole new approach. It's one of the wackiest stories in Hollywood. Wim struggled valiantly to keep it together. I suppose it was a miracle it was any good at all."

"The idea of the book and the movie is terrific. It was a comment on the whole film noir genre. Where does the writer begin and his stories end? Hammett himself is a fascinating character. My character was partly based on the Op, who was based on people Hammett knew. So he should have been a better-developed character, which was one of the frustrations of the film. But Wim was wonderful."

Then there were the inevitable parodies. George Segal played Sam Spade, Jr. in *THE BLACK BIRD* (a 1975 comedy with Elisha Cook and Lee Patrick reviving their roles from the Huston film). David Niven and Maggie Smith were suave Dick and Dora Charleston in Neil Simon's *MURDER BY DEATH*, a 1976 mystery satire with Peter Falk as the Spade-like Sam Diamond. In 1978, Falk re-

turned as the Spade/Marlowe parody, Lou Peckinpah, in Simon's *THE CHEAP DETECTIVE*.

Hammett's place as a literary hero was enhanced in the 80s by the appearance in quick succession of the biographies by Laymen, Nolan, Johnson, and Symons. Hammett had become a figure as heroic as Sam Spade and Nick Charles. He had burned out his talent and desire to write in Hollywood; yet, after his death, he emerged from the ashes as a bigger-than-life character on the screen.

Mark Dawidziak is a film critic at the Akron Beacon Journal and the author of such books as *The Columbo Phile* and *Night Stalking: A 20th Anniversary Kolchak Companion*.



George Segal got *THE BLACK BIRD* as Sam Spade, Jr., in the 1975 followup.

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TOP RIGHT: Brenda Joyce took over as Jane when Maureen O'Sullivan left after *TARZAN'S NEW YORK ADVENTURE* (1942). Weissmuller and Sheffield stayed with the series when it moved from MGM to RKO. BOTTOM RIGHT: Acquanetta as "the other woman."

TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN

Continued from page 84

TIVE WILD WOMAN; in fact, the stock footage amounts to nearly a quarter of the film's 61-minute running time.) The director was at his best helming action, horror, and sci-fi thrillers. His credits include *SECRET OF THE BLUE ROOM* (1933), *THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE* (1943), *TARZAN AND THE AMAZONS* (1945), *TARZAN AND THE HUNTRESS* (1947), *ROCKETSHIP X-M* (1951), *TARZAN AND THE SHE-DEVIL* (1953), *KRONOS* (1957), and *THE FLY* (1958).

As with all previous RKO Tarzans, Paul Sawtell composed the riveting musical score. (Sawtell's credits include 1944's *WEIRD WOMAN*, *JUNGLE WOMAN*, *DEAD MAN'S EYES*, 1944's *THE PEARL OF DEATH*, 1957's *THE BLACK SCORPION*, *THE FLY*, and 1958's *IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE*.) The unusual leopard men ritual was choreographed by Lester Horton. (The dances "resemble a high school gym class warming up," according to an uncredited *Variety* critic.) The Arbutum and the RKO Encino Ranch were used as locations for the jungle and city scenes, respectively.

Beginning in 1943 with *TARZAN TRIUMPHS*, Sol Lesser produced every RKO Tarzan adventure for 15 years. In 1938, a three-way deal between MGM, Lesser, 112 SCARLET STREET

and Burroughs had been struck, whereby Metro purchased three of the five Tarzan stories that Lesser then owned; the results were *TARZAN FINDS A SON!* (1939), *TARZAN'S SECRET TREASURE* (1941), and *TARZAN'S NEW YORK ADVENTURE* (1942), the final three Tarzan pictures at MGM. As a result, when Metro withdrew from the Tarzan market in 1942, Lesser acquired Johnny Weissmuller's contract from MGM for "unspecified considerations." Also included in the bargain were Johnny Sheffield, who was perfectly willing to continue with the series, and Maureen O'Sullivan, should she decide to be available for further Tarzan pictures. (She decided she wasn't.) Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc., also benefited immensely by the new deal, being paid an advance as well as a percentage of the profits.

For Sol Lesser, who produced 16 Tarzan films over a period of three decades, Johnny Weissmuller was his favorite of all the ape-men who worked for him. (The others included Buster Crabbe, Lex Barker, and Gordon Scott.) "Weissmuller not only had the physique," remembered Lesser fondly, "but he had that kind of face—sensual, animalistic, and good-looking—that gave the impression of jungle . . . outdoor life. Undoubtedly, Johnny was the greatest of all Tarzans."



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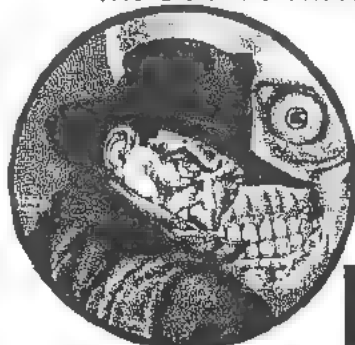
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PERVERSION

(Estupro: Perversão)
1978 color

This movie is sick! Marins plays a millionaire with bizarre sexual habits. In one of his most "inspired" moments, he bites off a girl's nipple only to show it as a trophy to his friends. The original title *Estupro* (Rape, had to be changed due to censorship)



THE END OF MAN

(Fim do Homem)
1971 b&w

This is Marins' "serious" movie. He plays Fim do Homem, a preacher with alleged supernatural powers. See Mojica waking up the dead, curing paraplegics and penetrating the psychedelic world of the hippies. A very interesting study on the exploration of faith and mysticism.



THE STRANGE HOSTEL OF NAKED PLEASURES

(A Estranha Hospedaria
dos Prazeres)
1975 color

Produced by José Mojica Marins and directed by his disciple Marcelo Motta, this horror movie shows Mojica as the owner of a haunted hostel where the guests can make their most abnormal dreams come true. The many bizarre scenes invoke the same ambience as his earlier banned film *Awakenings of the Beast* (1968). There's plenty of violence.



THIS NIGHT I WILL POSSESS YOUR CORPSE

(Esta Noite Encarnarei
no Teu Cadáver)
1968 b&w w/color insert

In this sequel to the classic *At Midnight I Will Take Your Soul*, Ze do Caixão (Coffin Joe) continues his search for the perfect woman that will give him a perfect child. This film has some of the most intense horror scenes of Mojica's career. See him crushing people's heads in his horror chamber, torturing innocent women with 50 real tarantulas and finally meeting the incarnated spirits. The movie is in black & white, except for an outstanding sequence in which Coffin Joe is dragged to Hell, where he is forced to watch all kinds of atrocities. The poster for this movie reads "SEE HELL IN COLOR!"

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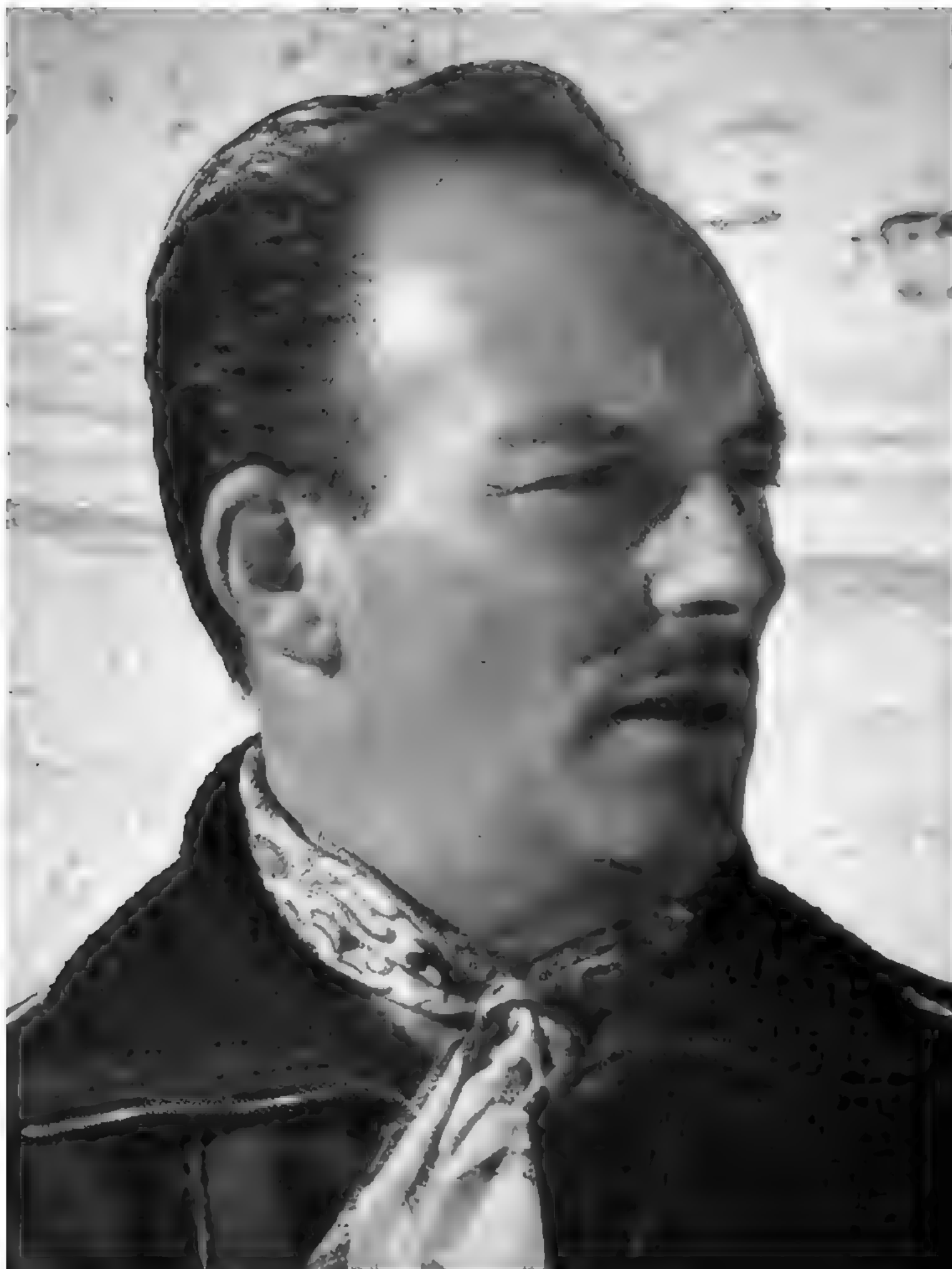


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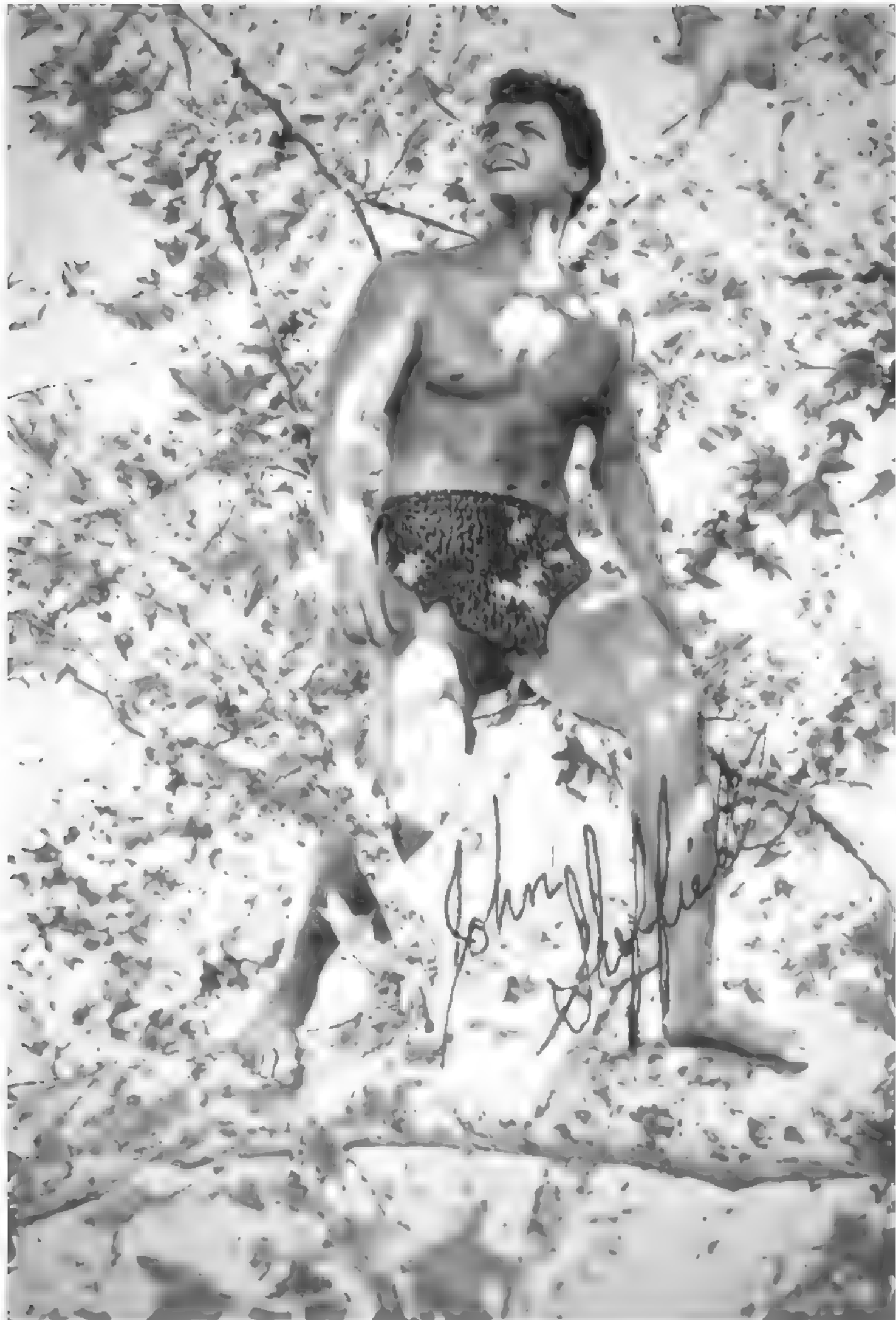
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WARNER BROS. PRESENTS A DAVID L. LOVATO PRODUCTION

A FILM BY DAVID L. LOVATO

YOU CAN'T
ESCAPE IT!
NOTHING CAN
DESTROY IT!
**It's Coming
For YOU.**
From Space to wipe
all living things from
the face of the Earth!
CAN IT BE STOPPED?







John
Dew
"Chief" Dew





ASSOCIATED BRITISH-PATHE LIMITED presents
A HAMMER FILM PRODUCTION

JAMES DONALD · ANDREW KEIR
BARBARA SHELLEY · JULIAN GLOVER

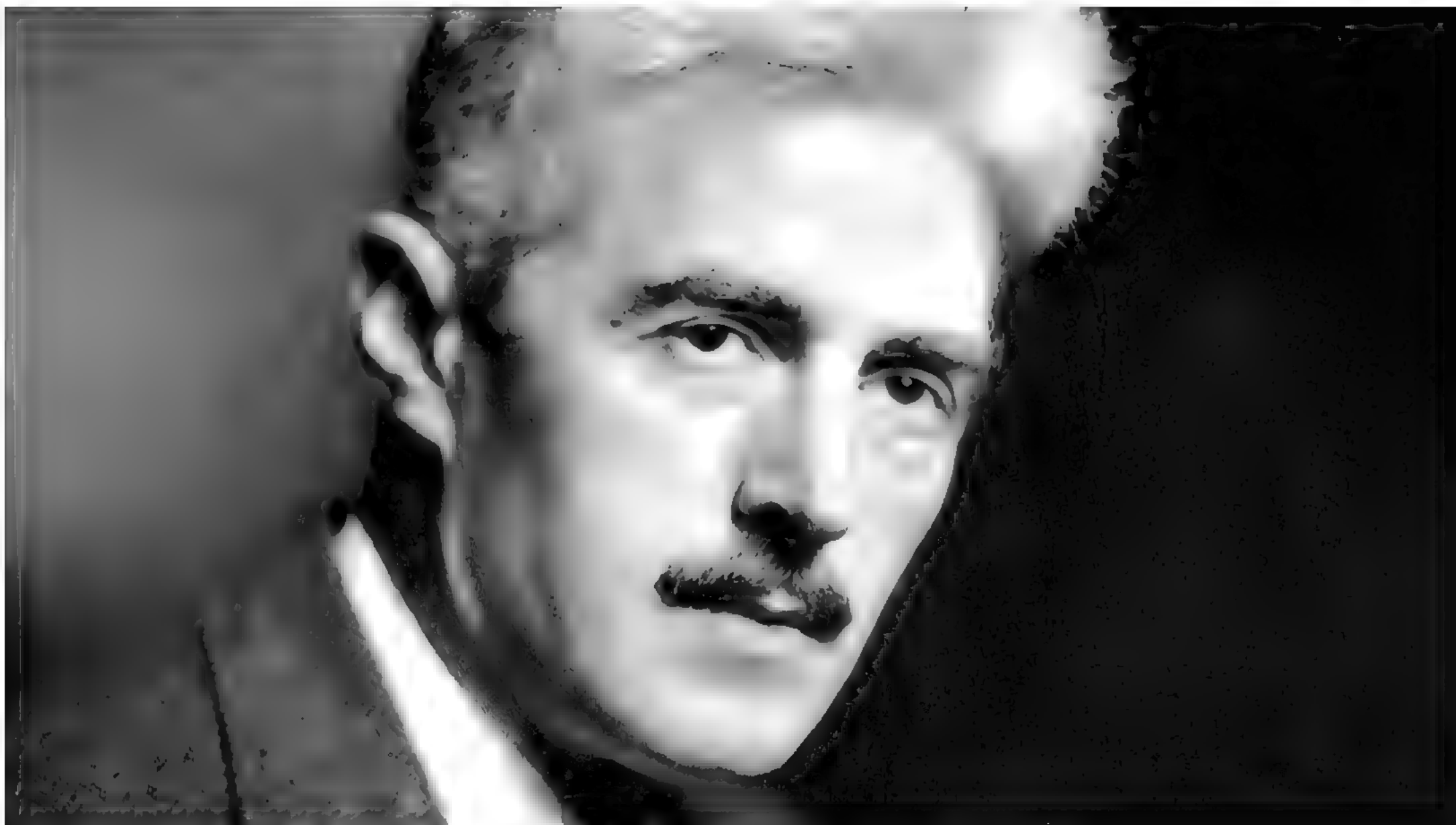
in
"QUATERMASS AND THE PIT" (X)

TECHNICOLOR ®

Released through WARNER-PATHE DISTRIBUTORS LTD





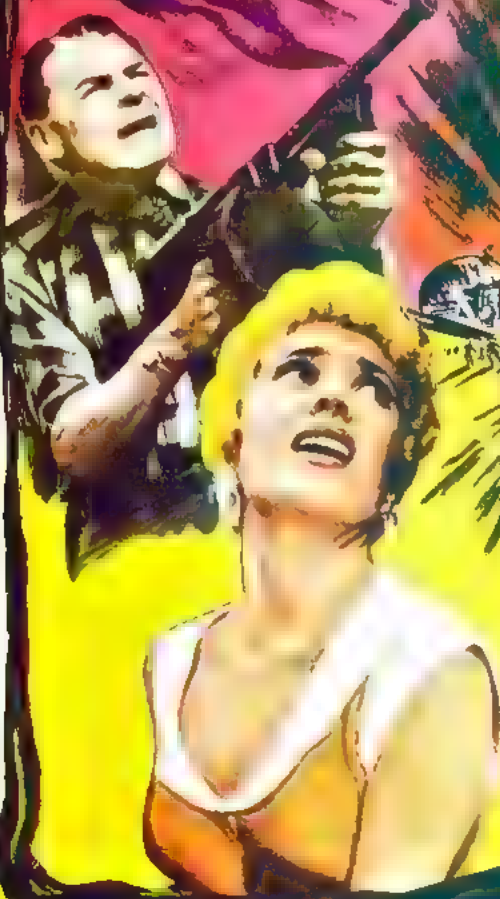




Marshall Rippa



**A horrible
enemy from the
unknown
strikes terror
across the
earth!...**



ENEMY FROM SPACE

STARRING

BRIAN DONLEVY

with **SIDNEY JAMES • JOHN LONGDEN • BRYAN FORBES**

VERA DAY • WILLIAM FRANKLYN

Original Story by **NIGEL KNEALE**

Screenplay by **NIGEL KNEALE and VAL GUEST**

Directed by **VAL GUEST** • Produced by **ANTHONY HINDS**

Released thru **UNITED ARTISTS**

**BRIAN
DONLEVY**

IN

Quatermass

II

with **SIDNEY JAMES**
JOHN LONGDEN · BRYAN FORBES
VERA DAY · WILLIAM FRANKLYN

and **CHARLES LLOYD**

Original Story by **RIGEL KNEALE**

Screenplay by **RIGEL KNEALE** and **VAL GUEST**

Produced by **ANTHONY HINDS**

Directed by **VAL GUEST**

A **HAMMER FILM PRODUCTION**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER **MICHAEL CARRERAS**



una tremenda avventura ai confini dell'impossibile



L'ASTRONAVE ATOMICA DEL DOTT. Quatermass



BRIAN DONLEVY · JACK WARNER · RICHARD WORDSWORTH
DAVID KING WOOD · THORA HIRD · GORDON JACKSON

REGIA DI VAL GUEST

PRODUZIONE ANTHONY HINOS
EXCLUSIVE FILMS



*Bryan Forbes as
Marsh, Quatermass's assistant*



*Vera Day, who plays the role of Sheila, the girl attacked by
visitors from another world*



*Brian Donlevy as
Quatermass, the scientist*

QUATERMASS II



*Quatermass speaks to Brand and Marsh at his laboratory
about mysterious objects seen on their radar screens. He feels
that they may be the objects which had seriously injured a
young man on a moorland he had crossed. Brand estimates
that they are falling at Winnerden Flats*

Brian Donlevy, William Franklyn (Brand), Bryan Forbes



*At Winnerden Flats, Quatermass and Marsh are astonished
to find a strange research plant similar to his model "moon
project" upon which they have been working. Marsh picks
up a complete missile—but something breaks from it and
settles on his face*

Bryan Forbes, Brian Donlevy



*Before Quatermass can help Marsh to a doctor, he is sur-
rounded by armed security guards who order him to leave.
He drives to a small town and contacts the police, who tell
him that the plant is a Government secret and that they can
do nothing*

Brian Donlevy













905-A







ALLIED ARTISTS Presents "THE GOLDEN IDOL" with BOMBA of the Jungle starring JOHNNY SHEFFIELD
as Bomba with ANNE KIMBELL, PAUL GUILFOYLE and KIMBO, The Chimp

Printed in the U S A

54/20



ALLIED ARTISTS Presents "SAFARI DRUMS" with BOMBA of the Jungle, starring JOHNNY SHEFFIELD, as Bomba, with DOUGLAS KENNEDY, BARBARA BESTAR, and KIMBBO, The Chimp.

Printed in the U.S.A.

53/393





